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THE
RED BOOK OF APPIN:

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A

Story of the Middle Ages:

WITH

OTHER HERMETIC STORIES,

AND

ALLEGORICAL FAIRY TALES.

SM

WITH

INTERPRETATIONS

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"ALCHEMY AND THE ALCHEMISTS;" "SWEDENBORG A HERMETIC PHILOSOPHER;" AND "CHRIST THE SPIRIT."

(Ethan Allen Hitchcock)

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A few words upon recent publications of Fairy, and other Mystical Tales and Traditions: with Explanatory Notes upon a Story in Campbell's Collection of West Highland Stories.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

Within a few years past many volumes have been published in England and on the European continent, under the titles of Fairy Tales, Nursery Tales, Popular Tales, &c., embracing stories of all kinds, many of them preserved by tradition, handed down in different countries from unknown sources. We have Keightley's Fairy Mythology ; Thorpe's Yule-Stories, and his Northern Mythology ; Campbell's Popular Tales of the West Highlands, and Dasent's Popular Tales of the Norsemen, &c. : then we have Fairy Tales from all Nations by Montalba ; Halliwell's Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales ; Taylor's

edition of the Fairy Ring (translated from the German), and a valuable volume of translations from Grimm's Popular German Tales, &c.

In several of these volumes the editors warmly congratulate themselves that they do not feel called upon, in the present state of public feeling and opinion with respect to such Tales, to apologize for their publication, alleging that, nowadays, *grown* children are taking a profound interest in them. They even affirm that wise men are discovering hidden treasures, concealed wisdom, in many of these marvellous stories about giants ; and about kings and queens, with (usually) *three* sons or *three* daughters, the interest of the stories commonly turning, like that of the story of Cupid and Psyche, upon the youngest child.

A few years ago the disposition to seek for hidden meanings in Popular Nursery Tales was, no doubt, carried to excess; and, as might have been expected, the disposition fell under the lash of a class of *smart* writers, apt in the use of that potent weapon ridicule, but not very sharp after all in "seeing into things out of sight;" and for a time it was doubtful whether any new editor would have the courage to appear in public. Experience has shown, however, that the interest of the public in popular Tales and Traditions has gone on increasing, if we may judge by the number of volumes of that character recently published, until no intelligent student can now excuse himself for not examining this species of literature and coming to some conclusion as to its import.

It is worth remarking that one of the greatest of recent German writers has introduced into his works two Fairy Stories in particular, to say nothing of the symbolic character of his writings in general, full of valuable meaning to those who understand them. We refer to the New Melusina in Meister's Travels, and the so-called tale in the story of the German Emigrants. No one who can dive into the sense of these two tales will hastily conclude that all fairy stories are mere senseless fictions, addressed to the fancy and capacity of childhood. But while this must be admitted, it is evident, on the other hand, that the supposition of a profound sense in all popular tales indiscriminately, would be the extreme of folly in the other direction: it would be as absurd as to attribute in

good earnest all modern jokes to one Joe Miller.

If some of the stories in question do really enclose an interesting, not to say a profound rational sense, and in other respects furnish valuable materials for study, which can hardly be doubted, it becomes an important question, as to how the reader is to discriminate between such tales and traditions as have value, and the no doubt much larger class of fictions void of sense and utterly worthless. How, it may be asked, is the reader to separate the wheat from the chaff, and feel any tolerable security that he is not practising a delusion upon himself in the study of these products of the fancy or the imagination ?

Doubtless this is an important question ; but it is not the purpose of the writer to dis-

cuss it at this time. He has already had something to say on this subject elsewhere, and will here only remark, that the interpreter of mystical writings, especially those that have reached us from antiquity, cannot be too careful in securing his fast hold upon what is called truth and nature, or, more appropriately, the truth of nature ; for this alone is the true key to whatever has been written in the spirit of that truth. With this precaution, however, no one need be particularly exposed in searching out a hidden sense in Fairy or other mythological tales, though it may not be worth while, after obtaining the key (often drawn from the study itself), to bestow much time upon this species of study. Books in general are designed to serve a particular purpose ; and when that purpose is

accomplished they may be consigned to the past, as respects the student, or, to the future, to repeat their service to a rising or coming generation.

It is certain, meantime, and this should be well considered, that the best of ancient learning was couched in proverbs and parables, as Lord Bacon himself has told us ; and Solomon has left, as a perpetual record, the declaration, that—A wise man will hear, and will increase learning ; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels, [so as] to understand a proverb and the interpretation ; the words of the wise and their dark sayings. If there are those who imagine that the wise king would have excluded Fairy Tales from the contemplation of wise men, then let them not claim a divine

sense for the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

There are those who believe that the imagination is a great creative power in the soul; which, in itself, "is vague and unstable;" and that it is the duty of the artist "to regulate and to fix it, and at last to exalt it into visible presence." When thus disciplined, it is supposed that the imagination may "body forth the forms of things unknown, and give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name" far more enduring than the visible forms of external nature. But we will not discuss this point.

It may just be remarked here, that while some of the Fairy and other tales, recently brought to light, have a heathen origin, probably in part Druidical, and some have what

is called a profane or unreligious source ; there are others again, which are like those of the *Gesta Romanorum*, entirely Christian in their character, for which we are undoubtedly indebted to the monks of the middle ages, who were at one time in possession of most of the libraries and nearly all of the learning of the Christian world.

The writer of these remarks, in the hope of discovering some grains of gold amid "the dust of the middle ages," has recently been looking into Campbell's collection of West Highland Stories, and, mixed up with a good deal that most readers would, no doubt, consider little better than rubbish (though it might not be well to be over bold in passing judgment), he has found some tales, and not a few either, which have given out what seems

to him a most rich and valuable meaning, in the highest degree instructive.

One of these peculiarly constructed tales may be found at page 87 of the second volume of the collection just named ; but as the book may not be conveniently at hand for the general reader, we will copy the Tale entire, omitting no syllable of it, and will then, by way of notes, append what we understand to be its import.

It is requested, however, that before examining the notes, the reader will slowly pass the story before his eyes, silently pondering the question—What was the purpose of this story ? and let him lay his mind to it in that spirit of earnestness which, in the church, takes the form of prayer. If he does not readily discover the meaning, then let him

read the explanatory notes, and decide whether the imputed sense is or is not in the story.

The story purports to account for the manner in which a certain mysterious RED BOOK came to be at a place called Appin, in Argyleshire ; and it is recorded, according to tradition, as recited by one JOHN, whoever he was, who began in the approved style of all fireside story tellers.

An elaborate explanation is given here of one story ; but a volume might easily be made, beginning with pretty full explanations and closing with a few hints only, leaving room for the exercise of the reader's ingenuity, or rather his candor, for mere ingenuity alone will hardly carry any one into the heart of that peculiar style of writing. Four other stories

are added, viz.: "The Six Swans," "The White Dove," "Dummling and the Toad" (from the "Fairy Ring"), and "The Fox's Brush," with a very few words which will serve to give the clue by which the reader may be guided into the interior meaning of these fanciful tales. It is not hidden, nor is it far off.

The story of the "Six Swans" illustrates the case of a man who has commenced "a hunt" after the "stag"—Truth—in the "great forest" of the world, and has been carried by his peculiar genius away from his companions. At length—perhaps in the "evening" of life—he comes to a stand, having discovered that he has lost his way. He has mistaken either the true object of pursuit or the "way" to it. The world now confronts

him in the character of a witch, for the world is a witch to many who have no belief in witchcraft. The pursuit of Truth—misdirected or misconducted, we may suppose—having failed, the man is in a fit condition to accept the temptations of the world, which appear in the form of a fascinating daughter—a daughter of like nature, probably, with her mother. I have thus put the key into the lock: let the curious reader turn it for himself; it will move more easily, and he will see how the ever-recurring Truth may be transmitted in a fairy talê from age to age, to be recognized by those whose eyes the Truth has opened.

In the story of the White Dove, again, the Young Girl represents the principle of Truth, or a genuine faith in man or woman;—the

"master and mistress" with whom she is driving, are the body and soul. In mid life the party are assailed by a band of robbers, who rush out upon them from the thicket of the world's temptations, and destroy all that was destructible of it. But the principle of Truth passes safely "through the midst," as it did in John, when Jesus was sought to be taken by violence, or in another instance when he retires to Bethabara beyond Jordan —that is, when he conceals himself behind the Letter of the Word.

The world figures in these stories in infinite ways—sometimes as a whole and often in some of its particular aspects. It is a witch, a giant, a monster. In a still larger sense Nature appears in endless forms. She is a "hedgehog" over whose "fretful quills" we

may pass our hands with impunity so long as we pass them in the right direction; but if we pass them in the opposite direction, we are wounded and lacerated: if we persist we are destroyed. At one time the true principle is described as a "simpleton," as in Dummling and the Toad, because Nature goes steadily but with the utmost simplicity to her work, and never deviates from it. She gives us a thread to walk by, but if we lose the thread we fall into manifold difficulties. One may enlarge at pleasure on the principle illustrated in this simple way. The thread is the clue of Ariadne; it is the dæmon of Socrates. If we wander into the wrong path, we must find the thread again; there is no other way, for Nature always does one thing, and by one method, notwithstanding her end-

less diversities. She insists on obedience; and those who do not go willingly with her she sometimes saves in the character of a Fox, allowing the lost one a seat upon her tail, as in the ingenious story of the Fox's Brush. A deep and significant story this. The eyes at first are "holden" and do not discover the principle of Life in the Fox; nor are they opened until the two extremes —the head and tail—the two thieves—are cut off.

Nature, in her truth and simplicity, is the true "mother," ever kind and gentle, wounding only to save. When insulted by wilful neglect she becomes a "step-mother," and when violated she becomes the most inexorable of masters, wearing the terrible face of a tyrant.

No mere fanciful theory can touch the core of this matter, and it is useless to quarrel with the "dish" in which a certain "golden fruit" is presented to us. We had better make friends with the Fairies and find out what they mean; for sometimes they represent angels; and these again represent very familiar friends if we put ourselves in a right relation toward them. In many of these stories we read of a marvellous well, or a spring of clear water, widening into what seems a lake, in the bottom of which may be descried a magnificent city. So, in these little pools of fairy legend, extraordinary wonders may be discovered by those who have eyes to see.

WASHINGTON CITY, *January* 2, 1863.

THE STORY

OF THE

RED BOOK OF APPIN.

THE STORY

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"Once upon a time there lived a man [note 1] at Appin, Argyleshire, and he took to his house [2] an orphan boy [3]. When the boy was grown up he was sent to Herd [4]; and upon a day of days, and him herding, there came a fine gentleman [5] where he was, who asked him to become his servant, and (promised) that he would give him plenty to eat and drink, clothes, and

great wages [6]. The boy told him that he would like very much to get a good suit of clothes, but that he would not engage till he would see his Master [7]; but the fine gentleman would have him engaged without delay: this the boy would not do upon any terms, till he would see his Master. 'Well,' said the gentleman, 'in the mean time, write your name in this Book.' Saying this, he put his hand into his oxter pocket, and pulling out a large Red Book, he told the boy to write his name in the Book. This the boy would not do; neither would he tell his name, till he would acquaint his Master first. 'Now,' said the gentleman, 'since you will neither en-

gage nor tell me your name [8] till you see your present Master, be sure to meet me about sunset to-morrow, at a certain place.' The boy promised that he would be sure to meet him at the place about sunsetting. When the boy came home he told his Master what the gentleman said to him. 'Poor boy,' says he, 'a fine master he would make; lucky for you that you neither engaged nor wrote your name in his Book [9]: but since you promised to meet him, you must go; but as you value your life, do as I tell you.' His Master gave him a sword [10], and at the same time he told him to be sure and be at the place mentioned a while before sunset [11], and to draw a circle

round himself with the point of his sword in the name of the Trinity [12]. 'When you do this, draw a cross in the centre of the circle [13]; upon which you will stand yourself; and do not move out of that position till the rising of the sun next morning [14]. He also told him that the gentleman would wish him to come out of the circle to put his name in the Book; but that upon no account was he to leave the circle. 'But ask the Book till you would write your name yourself [15], and when once you get hold of the Book keep it [16]; he cannot touch a hair of your head, if you keep inside of the circle' [17].

"So the boy was at the place [18]

long before the gentleman made his appearance; but sure enough he came after sunset: he tried all his arts to get the boy outside of the circle, to sign his name in the Red Book; but the boy would not move one foot out of the place where he stood [19]; but at the long last he handed the Book to the boy, so as to write his name therein. The Book was no sooner inside the circle, than it fell out of the gentleman's hand inside the circle [20]: the boy cautiously stretches out his hand for the Book, and as soon as he got hold of it he put it into his oxter. When the fine gentleman saw that he did not mean to give him back the Book, he got furious; and

at last he transformed himself into a great many likenesses, blowing fire and brimstone out of his mouth and nostrils [21]: at times he would appear as a horse; other times as a huge cat, and a fearful beast [22]: he was going round the circle the length of the night: when day was beginning to break he let out one fearful screech; he put himself into the likeness of a large raven, and he was soon out of the boy's sight. The boy still remained where he was till he saw the sun in the morning [23], which no sooner he observed than he took to his soles home as fast as he could [24]. He gave the Book to his Master [25]; and this is how the far-famed RED BOOK was got."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

NOTE 1. Once upon a time *there lived a man.* MAN is the subject of this story, as he is of most stories and tales of all sorts; and, truly, Man is the subject of all the wonders and marvels of the world. He is the great miracle of nature, and is said to carry within himself the greatest secret in the universe. What he signifies in this story must be left to be disclosed by the general sense of the Tale.

2. The man took *to his house.* By the expression *his house*, we may understand the man himself. Man is often called a house in Scripture; and the story we are considering, as will soon appear, is a symbolical illustration of one of the greatest mysteries of Scripture; and not one merely, but the entire course of Christian doctrine. Man is called a house: Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live, 2d

Kings 20, 1; that is, set thyself in order, and prepare for death. Again: The house of the righteous shall stand; but that of the wicked shall be overthrown, Prov. 12, 7, and 14, 11. Again: we read in Hebrews 6, 3, that Christ is a Son over his own house, whose house are we, if, &c. Again: Every man went into his own house, John 7, 3; that is, after a certain discussion with the Pharisees, every man of them returned to his own opinion. Again: Jesus enters Peter's house; that is, the Spirit of Truth enters Peter himself,—and *cures* or corrects *his* opinion of the visible church, the mother of his faith; faith being the daughter of the church, and Peter's wife. But in Scripture the expression house, as also that of wife, is used in various senses.

3. The man took to his house *an Orphan Boy*. An orphan has neither father nor mother: and thus far he becomes a good figure for Melchisedek, who was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; and he was made like unto the Son of God. Heb. 7, 3. He is called also king of righteousness; and after that,

King of Peace,—or, as we may read it, the Prince of Peace. This is the most mysterious personage in Scripture next after Him, to whom he is said to be "like:" but the likeness itself is a mystery, and is no other than the secret of the Lord.

Let the reader apprehend, if he can, the idea of one who has neither father nor mother, beginning of days nor end of life; and then let him compare this idea with his idea of the Son of God, who was, according to John, with God in the beginning, and was God; his own Father and his own Son. By thus contemplating the inward idea until it takes the form of faith, he may at length perceive the force of the simile of the Orphan Boy,—which the man took to his own house, that is, to his own soul.

4. The Boy was sent *to Herd.* That is, he was sent into the wilderness of the world, to encounter that class of people called by the Baptist a generation of "vipers," Matt. 3, 7, bipeds with quadrupedal names.

In a similar sense, we read the instructions to the disciples, Behold, I send you forth as sheep amidst wolves, Matt. 10, 16. This is a usual comparison in

Scripture. Sometimes particular passions, or tendencies, or principles are figured by particular animals, as by the lion, the leopard, the lamb, and the kid, as also by the bear, the serpent, &c.

We read that on the first appearance of Christ from the Jordan, he was taken into the wilderness "to be tempted of the devil;" and we now come to the image of this in the story before us.

5. There came (to the orphan boy) *a fine gentleman.* This is no other than a certain personage who appears in the 6th verse of the first chapter of Job: Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and *Satan came also among them.* This is the gentleman who offered the Lord "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," —if he would fall down and worship him;—that is, if he would become his servant, as expressed in this story. The story represents this personage as a fine gentleman: and, in truth, he finely represents the world and the temptations thereof. He offers the boy plenty to eat and drink, and clothes; but keeps out of view the doctrine, that the life is more than meat, and the body

than raiment, Matt. 6, 25. He makes many promises, and among them

6. *Great wages:* but he omits to tell the boy that the wages of sin is death; and that sin and the exclusive service of the world are synonymous expressions. He does not remind the boy of the text: Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

The boy, however, is not easily seduced by this Mephistopheles: he tells the tempter that he will make no engagement till he can first see

7. *His master.* Who now is the Master of this mysterious boy? This we must determine by the character of the cautions and commandments he gives the boy, and by the conduct of the boy himself, which we shall soon see.

8. The boy refused to give his name to the fine gentleman. This signifies that the worldly man, called by St. Paul sometimes the carnal and sometimes the natural man, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. . . . Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2, 14. St. Paul intimates the same thing when he speaks of the life of

the true disciples as being *hid* in Christ. Such men may be said to be invisible to those who are devoted to the world, or to a merely worldly life, and the latter asks in vain the *name*, that is, the signification of such a life.

9. The boy had been desired to write his name in a certain book, held out to him by the fine gentleman, and was commended by his Master for not doing it.

To write one's name is a pledge; and to write one's name in a book held out by the world and its enticements, is to surrender the hope of life into the grasp of death. Turn ye, turn ye,—for why will ye die, O house of Israel; that is, turn ye from the service of the world to the service of God, often figured in Scripture by the expressions death and life; for these expressions, thus used in Scripture, do not refer to the body. St. Paul tells us that the friendship of the world is enmity with God; and a greater than St. Paul gives a sufficient warning, to those who will receive it, in the language: For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

As the boy is now about to encounter the fine gentleman, that is, the world, his Master, besides many verbal cautions and instructions, gave him

10. *A sword.* The sword is the emblem of courage; and in the conflicts of the spirit with the world this virtue is greatly needed. When Moses gave his last instructions to the children of Israel, to go over and possess the Land of Promise, Deut. 31, where the Heathens were to be destroyed, he exhorts them to be strong and of good courage; assuring them that God (their Master) would not fail nor forsake them: and he gave the same encouragement to Joshua "in the sight of all Israel," Be strong and of good courage,—the language being repeated to give emphasis to it; by which we may understand its importance.

The figurative character of this Mosaic history has been sufficiently pointed out by Origen and others; the transition from Egypt to the Holy Land signifying the passing over of the Israelites from a material to a spiritual life, to which end it became necessary to destroy the worldly passions, figured by the Heathen.

But we will return to the matter in hand, in illustration of the figurative use of the sword.

In Ezek. 30, 24, we read, that God gave his sword (in other words he gave his spirit, or his power) to those who fought the good fight of faith in his name. We read much in the Scripture of the sword of the Spirit; the Spirit, indeed, being compared to a two-edged sword.

11. The boy was directed to meet the fine gentleman before sunset. This signifies that he was directed to encounter the world before any dimness should pass over that Light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" that light which whoso foregoes becomes an early victim to the fine gentleman in the form of riches, of honors, or of pleasures, for he takes many forms; for here is the *broad path* we read of in Scripture, and many there be who go in thereat. These riches, honors, and pleasures often figure as giants, or other monsters, in these mythical stories of the middle ages; and we often see them destroyed by the youngest child of wealthy parents—not without reference to the power of the Spirit, which, though latest in birth, from

a material view, is first in power. For who may abide His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? It was He who, in the person of Samson, killed the lion. It was He who, in the person of David, slew the giant of Gath, and who killed both the lion and the bear while yet a youth; and here the student may consider whether the giant of Gath, the lion and the bear, though killed of old, are not yet, nevertheless, in the world, going at large to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it; for the history of the past can only furnish "ensamples" for our instruction and guidance.

To guard against the fine gentleman, that is, against the world, its giant temptations and its magical enchantments, figured in many of these tales of the middle ages as a witch (the very serpent in Eden, and no less the beast in the Revelation), the boy was directed to draw a circle round himself in the name of

12. *The Trinity.* We see plainly here, that this story originated with a Christian, and must have been told in the interest of Christianity. We may therefore

expect to find in Christianity the key for disclosing its meaning.

The boy was further directed

13. To draw a cross in the centre of the circle, and *to stand upon it.* The circle expresses the limit or boundary between holiness and sin, which have no inter-communication the one with the other: and the boy was commanded to stand upon the cross, and not to move from it until

14. *The rising of the sun the next morning.* The cross is the emblem of Christianity, and stands here for the church of Christ. We read particularly of two Lights in Scripture: one is compared to that of the Lamp; and this is the Law, the Divine Law of Moses, which to the psalmist, was as a lamp to his feet, and threw a light upon his path;—but his pathway led to that other Light which is compared to that of the sun; and this is Christ, the spirit of both, the Law and the visible church. Christ is "the end of all," in whom, or in his church, the Christian is commanded to "abide," if he would overcome the world; that is, if he would overcome the fine gentleman. He must stand by or

upon the cross until the rising of the true Light, which is compared to that of the sun. This is the light of (whom) the Baptist is a witness, and as the Baptist is the forerunner of the light, so does the visible church precede the coming of the same light to the phenomenal or natural man.

Let us explain this a little further; and, for this purpose, we will refer to Dante; who, for aught any one seems likely to know, might have been contemporary with the author of the story under examination.

In the Vita Nuova of the great Italian poet, the visible church (of his day) is figured by a woman; and she is represented as midway, directly in line, between the poet and his Beatrice; and by Beatrice he means his Blessing. Now, he sees his blessing beyond, or through, that is, by means of the church. The woman who represents the church he calls Joan; telling us, himself, of the likeness of this name, an arbitrary name chosen by himself, to that of the Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ; so openly does the poet hint to us the meaning of his mystical writing. He tells us, also, that this woman, this Joan, was by

some called Primarina, or Spring; and he gives as the reason, that the Spring precedes the Summer, connecting this statement with the vision of his Beatrice; thus intimating that the two, the Spring and the Summer, are emblematic of the two women, Joan and Beatrice; who represent themselves, the visible and the invisible church, the latter being the true light of the former; the same two being the law and the true Gospel thereof. Whatever other meanings may be discovered in Dante, this single point seems to stand out with great clearness. Dante, we may suppose, contemplated the church until its spirit rose before him, and this spirit he personifies in Beatrice.

In like manner, according to the method of Dante's teaching, the boy was directed to stand upon the cross; that is, he was required to "abide" by the church, represented by the cross in the *centre* of the circle (the Spirit in the "midst"), while exposed to the dangers and temptations of the world, until he should see the rising of the sun in the morning; or, as Dante might say, until the vision of Beatrice should rise before him. This is the Light so much spoken of in Scripture, of

which the Scripture itself is a witness, represented by the Baptist, who baptizes in water, the symbol of the Letter—the baptism by fire being the Spirit of the letter. Isaiah points to the conditions under which the Light may be received, and exclaims—Then shall thy Light break forth as the morning (the reader will notice the simile), and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; and the glory (that is, the Light) of the Lord shall be thy reward; ch. 58, 8. The expression, "thy righteousness shall go before thee," states a truth of inexpressible importance, whether designed or not. The rewards of the world follow the life, or the visible actions of man in the world, but in the life of the Spirit, they go before the disciple, who thus sees his reward already in the future,—a doctrine which we may consider presented in a figure in many places of Scripture; in the pillar of fire by night and cloud by day, guiding the children of Israel in their exodus from Egypt; as also by the star which led the wise men to the true Light. Besides the passage just recited from Isaiah, the prophet refers to the same Light in many other places:

as, in ch. 60, 20: Thy sun shall no more go down, (after the coming of the true Light); neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting Light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. The sun and the moon here represent reason and faith, above which there is a true Light supporting them both.

The Scriptures are full of references to this Light, whose possessors were called the children of Light; but the figurative character of the expression is apt to mislead a student who imagines that he can see this Light bodily, or anything like it: hence the Law against making or bowing down to any graven image, or *anything* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. But let us return.

The Christian must stand upon the cross, or "abide" in Christ, until he comes out of darkness into *his* marvellous Light, 1. Pet. 2, 9.

This Light preceded that of the sun and the moon, whether these be taken figuratively or not; for we read that God said, on the first day, Let there be Light,

and there was Light, when, as yet, "the sun was not, neither the moon." The Law is said to be Light, Prov. 6, 22, because it teaches the "way" to the Light; and those who stand upon the Law (or "do" the will of Him who gave it) shall see the Light; that is, they shall see Him who published himself as the Light of the world, declaring that those who follow Him (that is, those who stand upon the cross) shall have the Light of Life, whose rising in the soul is compared, in this story of the Red Book, to the rising of the sun in the morning, the very simile of the prophet Isaiah, as we have just shown.

The reader need not imagine that, in treating this subject, there is a contradiction in speaking of Christ as both the *way* to the Light, and as the Light himself: as the "way," he is the Law (the "flesh," Phil. 3, 3–6), and he is the visible church (the "body" of Christ, Ephes. 2, 22, 23, Col. 1, 24); but as the Light, he is the eternal, the unspeakable *Word*. We see that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews falls into a seeming contradiction, in that, whilst he speaks of Melchisedek as without beginning of days or end of life, and therefore

eternal, he tells us that he was *made* like unto the Son of God; and even John, whilst in one place he tells us that the Word was with God and was (?) God, tells us also that the Word was *made* flesh. But let us return once more to our story.

His Master told the boy that the gentleman would wish him to come out of the circle, to put his name in the Book; that is, the world is continually enticing us to pass beyond the limits prescribed by the Divine Law; but the boy was directed on no account to leave the circle: "But," continues the Master, "ask the Book till you would write your name

15. *Yourself!*" Man is not saved by proxy: he is commanded by St. Paul to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. The virtues of another are encouragements to all good men; but it is the duty of every man for "himself" to open the door when Christ knocks, or He will not enter: without this, Christ will "sup" with no man.

Whatever speculations may be made about the will, its freedom from or dependence upon a higher power—a certain necessity for freedom in the Life-Spirit may

not be a contradiction, except to that discursive understanding which cannot comprehend how that which is eternal can with propriety be said to be "made." In any view of the mere speculative reason, those who look to the Law cannot fail to see that an awful alternative is offered to us in the language: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy Life;" Deut. 30, 19, 20. To obey the voice of the Lord, and to cleave unto Him, has the same meaning as the expression, to stand upon the cross.

16. The boy was commanded *to keep the Book* when once in his possession. When the true man once grasps the Spirit represented by the Book, which was RED, the color of blood, the symbol of life, he must on no account relax his hold: he must be sure "to keep it," and not fall away from grace once attained; for, if he thus falls, "his after state shall be worse than the first:"

but he has the promise, that so long as he keeps within the circle of Light whose centre is Christ (his Church or his Spirit), the fine gentleman

17. *Cannot touch a hair of his head.* The boy must not allow himself to be drawn beyond the limits of the circle, no, not by the persuasions of the fine gentleman in the exercise of "all his arts" and blandishments.

18. The boy was at the place of meeting—&c. This *place* is indefinitely called a *certain place;* not any specified place: because the fine gentleman may be met in all places, and so, also, at all times. We are always in the world while in the body, and are more or less exposed to its influences,—for which reason we are told to "watch" and to "pray" continually, lest we fall into temptation.

19. The boy would not move one foot out of the place where he stood. This presents a fine picture of that unshaken faith which "overcometh the world;" that is, which overcometh the fine gentleman.

20. *The Book falls from the hand* of the gentleman, the instant it passes within the circle. The hand is the symbol of power; and we are here taught that

the power of the evil one is absolutely paralyzed within the circle where Christ is the acknowledged Prince. The "name" of Christ, which is said in so many places to work as a charm, as also the "name" of God, signifies the Divine Law, obedience to which, represented by the figure of standing upon the cross (Christ being the fulfilment of the Law), arms the true disciple against all the powers of evil, and even gives him control over them. The devils (the bad passions?—Luke 10, 17) were subject to the disciples through the "name" of the Holy One; that is, through his power, which comes as a Light to those who perseveringly stand upon the cross, or "abide" in Christ; or, again, in the Law, which served as a schoolmaster to St. Paul to bring him to the Light; at which time, the Law in the Letter, called the "flesh" of Christ, "was done away with," or was "left behind." Thus also, the boy was free to leave the circle after he saw the true Light, represented by the rising of the sun.

When the fine gentleman is convinced that the Orphan Boy, who figures, among other things, the Spirit

of Truth, is sustained by a power above him, over which he has no control, he becomes furious,

21. *Blowing fire and brimstone out of his mouth and nostrils.* Thus, in like manner, as we read in the Revelation: And I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued smoke and brimstone.

The fine gentleman, thus disappointed in his designs upon the Orphan Boy, assumes all sorts of forms, among others that of a horse, and finally that of

22. *A fearful beast:* and although we are not told, as to his heads, how many he had, we need not doubt that he took the precise form of the beast we read of in the Revelation. If any one asks here, why so much is said in Scripture of four beasts, especially in the Revelation, he may be reminded that all antiquity saw or recognized four elements, and four only, in visible nature (the world). They saw also seven, and but seven planets, in the "midst" of which there was one said to be like the Son of God; for the Son of God

is in the "midst" of his works; as he also "stands among" us, even "when we know him not."

At the breaking of day (or the dawning of the divine reason in the soul, affirming the Divine Law), the beast disappears out of the sight of the boy; who has been until then the very figure of the true "heir;" as a "child," differing in nothing from a "servant;" Gal. 4, 1.

The beast disappearing, the Orphan Boy nevertheless remains steadily upon the cross until he sees

23. *The sun in the morning:* when he enters into that "liberty" declared by St. Paul for all those who are made "free in Christ," the true Light, or Light of Truth. Until thus made "free indeed,"—John 8, 36, —the Orphan Boy, being yet a "child," was bound to stand upon the cross; which means that he was in "bondage" to the forms and emblematic ceremonies of the visible church, the mystical bride of the Lord: but this bondage was for the good of the boy, as a means of bringing him into that "marvellous Light" which made him free indeed—free from the obligation of an unintelligent obedience to the external Law, or to the visible church, because he has received the

spirit of both, by which he has entered upon his true inheritance, the Holy Land, or has received a foretaste of it; and this is the "manifestation of Christ" in the soul, according to the promise—"I will manifest myself to him, who hath my commandments and keepeth them"—that is, to him who "abides" in Christ, or stands upon the cross waiting this manifestation.

But what use does the boy make of his freedom? He no sooner sees the sun arise—no sooner receives the true Light, the Gospel, or Truth of the Law—than

24. He passes *to his home*, as fast as he could: and where is the proper *home* of a Christian? We are told that here we have no abiding place, and that our proper home is in heaven; but this is to be in Christ, who is received by those who stand upon the cross, waiting His coming.

Almost all allusions to this mystery in the Scripture are figurative and symbolical. The loved disciple in the Gospel of John, is represented as receiving the Mother of Jesus as his own Mother, and is said to have taken her to his own *home*, (ch. 19, 25–27): but this means that he received her to his own *heart;* and this

signifies, again, that the loved disciple found his own house in the heart of his true mother, called by St. Paul the Jerusalem (or Church) above, the mother of us all; Gal. 4, 26. The true home of a Christian is often called a Rest, and is figured by the Sabbath. It is an inward experience infinitely removed from all possibility of adequate external representation; and hence it is, that it has been written about mystically in all ages. It is called by St. Paul a great mystery, in the Epistle to the Ephesians (5, 32), where he speaks of it under the figure of a marriage, the most holy and sacred of all human ties, yet falling immeasurably below that sense of unity with the divine nature which is the consummation of all divine teaching.

The boy having now received the Red Book, the emblem, as we have said, of the true blood,

25. *Gave the Book to his Master.* This is a figure by which the final duty of all men is taught; for in the end, all men are called upon to surrender to God, the true Master, that "gift of Life" by which man has been placed in a temporal scene of trial, where he has the power of writing his name in the Book of Life,

or of surrendering his claims to the true life by falling down in worship before the powers of the world, often called the powers of darkness (the beast of the Revelation)—figured in this most remarkable story, with exquisite taste, as a fine gentleman; because, the seductions of the world are never effective except when they present themselves in some attractive form.

Let not the simplicity of this tale suggest a doubt as to its deep import. It is one among thousands of figurative and symbolical teachings, one design of which is to leave the soul free while yet they teach; so that he who receives the teaching, however grateful he may be to the teacher, may nevertheless, in the language of St. Paul, "give all the glory to God;" for it borders on inspiration, and is said to rest on a principle incommunicable, directly from man to man, all writers agreeing that it is the gift of God, and not to be purchased, except by the sweat of the brow: Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money; Acts 8, 20. But this, rightly understood, ought to be an encouragement to the lover of Truth, instead of

being felt as a weight upon the heart, as it often is, for we may be sure that what is called the gift of God must be beyond the power of man to destroy. Hence the injunction: Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell.

Our book of Life (we call it ours) belongs to another, to whom we must deliver it when summoned by Him: and then, happy are they who find the words written in themselves: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

It is proper now to notice the fact already stated, that this story of the Orphan Boy is said to have been told by one JOHN; and certainly not without reference to that John who tells the story of Jesus so sublimely, and who saw the vision in the Isle of Patmos, himself being in that isle.

There seems nothing wanting to show the connection of this story with Christianity, and that it is a living picture of the everlasting doctrines of the Gospel;

visible now, as ever, to those who are privileged to feel themselves the friends of God; Wisdom, 14.

It would be easy to enlarge or extend this interpretation by numerous additional references to Scripture, illustrating more fully many points; but, for those who know the "way" to the Truth, this would be superfluous; while for those who do not, it might be without profit. This Orphan Boy (in many other stories he is figured as a *foundling*)—represents one (who) is compared to the wind, which, as we read, bloweth as it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: for so, is every one that is born of the Spirit. The sons of God, we may suppose, are content to know that they are heirs of salvation, and ask no questions as to whence they came or whither they go. In them hope has, most surely, given place to trust; and fear, that perpetual shadow of hope, being banished, they go on their way rejoicing in the Lord, who is their portion. To them the language must be clear: I am the Light of the world: whoso believeth in me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life. To them

the sun has risen, that sun which, we are told, shall never set: and this is to be a Christian, and such a Christian as was before Abraham.

There is not a more certain truth in the universe than that which is shadowed out in this unpretending story from the middle ages. The story itself is like the Spirit it celebrates: it is an orphan springing up "like a root out of the dry ground" of the past. No one knows its parentage in a worldly sense; and yet, most certainly, there are those who perfectly know the *family* to which the story belongs, and, in some sort, its very father and mother; for God never leaves himself without witness in the world.

THE SIX SWANS.

THE SIX SWANS.

A KING was one day hunting in a large forest, and he chased a stag so eagerly that none of his huntsmen could follow him. When it was evening, he stopped his horse and looked around him, and saw that he had lost his way. He sought everywhere for some path out of the wood, but all in vain. At length he saw an old woman, with a shaking head, coming toward him; but she was a witch, you must know. The king accosted her, and said, "My good woman, can you show me the way out of the wood?"

"Oh yes, sir king," answered she, "I can easily show you the way, but only upon one condition; and if you do not agree to it, you'll never again get out of the wood, and must die here with hunger." "What is the condition?" asked the king. "I have a daughter," said the old woman, "who is so beautiful, that her like is not to be found in the world, and who is well worthy to be your wife; if you will marry her and make her your queen, I will show you the way out of the wood."

The king, in the trouble of his heart, consented, and the old woman led him to her cottage, where her daughter was sitting by the fireside. She received the

king as if she had expected him, and he saw that she was very beautiful; nevertheless she did not please him, and he could not look at her without a secret dislike. When the king had lifted the maiden upon his horse, he placed her behind him, the old woman showed him the way, and at length the king reached his palace, where the marriage was celebrated.

The king had been married once before, and his first wife had brought him seven children, six boys and a little girl, whom he loved more than the whole world besides. Now he feared lest their stepmother should not treat them well, and that she might do them some harm;

so he took them secretly to a lonely castle, which stood in the midst of a wood. It lay so hidden, and the path to it was so hard to find, that the king himself would not have made it out, had not a wise woman given him a clew of thread of wonderful power: when he threw it on the ground, it unwound of itself, ran before and showed him the way. But the king went so often to visit his dear children, that the queen began to wonder at the cause of his absence; she was full of prying curiosity, and could not be easy until she knew what he did all alone in the wood. Then she gave his servants gold and silver, and they revealed to her the secret, and told her of

the clew of thread which could show the way.

The queen had now no rest until she had found out where the king kept the clew. Then she made some little shirts of white silk; and, as she had learnt the fairy art from her mother, she sewed into them a magical charm.

And one day, when the king was gone out a-hunting, she took the little shirts, and went into the wood, and the clew of thread showed her the way. The little boys, who from afar off saw some one coming, thought it must be their dear father, and ran joyfully to meet him. Then the queen threw one of the little shirts over each of them; and as

soon as it touched their bodies, they were changed into swans, and flew away over the wood. The queen returned home in high glee, and thought she was now rid of her stepchildren. But the little girl had not run out with her brothers, and the queen knew nothing of her being in the wood.

The next day the king came to the castle, to visit his children; but he found the little maiden all alone. "Where are thy brothers?" asked the king. "Alas! dear father," she answered, "they are gone away, and have left me all alone." Then she told him that she had seen from the window how her brothers had been changed into swans,

and had flown away over the wood; and she showed him the feathers they had let fall in the courtyard, and which she had picked up. The king was very sad, but he could not think that the queen had done such a wicked deed; and, fearing that the little maiden would also be stolen away, he wished to take her with him. But she had a great dread of her stepmother, and begged the king to let her stay one night longer in the castle.

Then the poor little maiden thought to herself, "I can no longer stay here; I will go and seek my brothers." And when night came on, she ran away, and went straight into the wood. She rambled the whole night through the

wood, and the next day also, until she was ready to drop from fatigue and could go no further. Then she came to a lonely cottage; so she went up the stairs, and found a room with six little beds in it. She did not, however, dare to lie down in any of them, but crept under one and laid herself upon the hard floor, to rest for the night.

Not long afterward, as the sun was going down, she heard a rustling noise, and saw six swans come flying in at the window. They seated themselves on the ground, blew upon one another, and blew all the feathers off them, and stript off their swan's skin like a shirt. Then the little maiden looked earnestly at them,

and knew them to be her brothers; whereat her heart leaped with joy, and she crept forth from under the bed. The brothers were no less rejoiced when they beheld her, but their joy did not last long. "Thou canst not stay here," said they; "this is a house of robbers, and when they come home and find thee here, they will kill thee." "But cannot you protect me?" asked the little sister. "No," answered they; "we can only put off our swan's skin for a quarter of an hour every evening, and during this time we have our natural form; but then we are changed again into swans." The little sister wept, and said, "But cannot you get free?" "Alas! no," answered

they; "the conditions are too hard; for six whole years thou must neither speak nor laugh, and in that time must sew for us six little shirts of star-flowers. If a single word falls from thy tongue, all the labor is lost." And when they had so said, the quarter of an hour was past, and they were changed into swans again and flew away out of the window.

But the little maiden thought in her heart that she would set her brothers free, even if it should cost her her life. So the next morning she went out, plucked a basketful of star-flowers, and began to sew. She could not talk to any one, and she had no mind to laugh; so she sat quietly at her needle, and

never once took her eyes from her work. She had been busied thus for a long time, when it happened that the king of that country was one day hunting in the wood, and his huntsmen came to a tree in which the little maiden was sitting. Then they called to her, and said, "Who art thou?" But she gave no answer. "Come down to us," said they; "we will do thee no harm." She only shook her head. But as they went on teasing her with questions she threw them down her golden necklace, thinking that would satisfy them. Yet still they did not leave off; so she threw down her girdle, and, when this also was of no use, she flung them her garters, and one thing

after another, all that she could spare, until nothing was left but her little shift.

But the huntsmen were not to be put off thus; they climbed up the tree, lifted the maiden down, and led her to the king. The king asked, "Who art thou? what wast thou doing up in the tree?" Still she did not answer. Then he asked her in all the languages he knew, but she remained dumb as a fish. But when the king saw how beautiful she was, his heart was moved, and he fell deeply in love with her. He wrapped his cloak round her, set her upon his horse, and brought her to his palace.

Then he ordered her to be clothed in a rich robe, and she shone in her

beauty like the bright day; but not a word could be got from her. The king seated her by his side at table, and her modest behavior pleased him so much that he said, "This is the maiden whom I shall marry, and none other in the world;" and a few days afterward the wedding took place.

But the king had a wicked mother, who was very angry at this marriage, and spoke ill of the young queen. "Who knows what slut this is, who cannot speak a word?" said she: "truly a pretty wife for a king!"

At the end of a year, when the queen brought her first child into the world, the old woman took it away from

her, and besmeared the floor with blood while she lay asleep. Then she went to the king, and made a complaint that the queen was an ogress. But the king could not believe it, and would not suffer any harm to be done to her. Meanwhile the young queen sat steadily at her work, sewing away at the shirts, and had not a thought for anything else.

The next time, when the queen had a fine little boy, the false old mother-in-law practised the same trick; but still the king could not bring himself to believe her story, and said, "She is too good and gentle to be capable of such a thing; if she were not dumb, and could speak for herself, her innocence would

come to light." But a third time the queen had a little child, and the old woman stole it away, and accused the queen as before. She however said not a word in her defence; so the king was obliged to give her up to be judged in the court, and she was condemned to die.

When the day came on which the sentence was to be executed, it happened to be the last day of the six years during which she was neither to speak nor laugh. She had freed her dear brothers from the power of the spell; and the six little shirts were all ready sewn, except that the last one still wanted a sleeve for the left arm. Now when she was led out

to be put to death, she hung the little shirts upon her arm; and just as she was going to be killed, she looked up, and there came six swans flying through the air. Then she saw that her deliverance was near at hand, and her heart beat with joy. The swans flew to her, and let themselves gently down, so that she could throw the little shirts over them; and no sooner were they touched by them, than the swans' skins fell off, and her brothers stood before her in their natural form, fresh and handsome; only the youngest wanted his left arm and had instead a swan's wing on his shoulder. Then they embraced and kissed one another, and the queen went

to the king, who was lost in amazement, and opened her lips and said, "Dearest husband, now I may speak, and declare to thee that I am innocent and falsely accused." So she told him all the arts of the old queen-mother, who had taken away her three children and hidden them. Then they were brought back again, to the great joy of the king, and the wicked old queen-mother was put to death.—But the king and the queen, with her six brothers, lived many years in peace and happiness.

THE WHITE DOVE.

THE WHITE DOVE.

A young girl was once riding in a coach with her master and mistress through a large wood; and when they came to the middle of it, a band of robbers rushed out of a thicket, and killed all whom they found. Thus all were killed except the maid, who had jumped in terror out of the coach and hidden herself behind a tree.

When the robbers had gone off with their booty, the maid came out, and saw the dreadful deed that had been done. Then she fell a-weeping bitterly, and

said, "Alas! what can a poor girl like me do? I know not the way out of the wood, and shall die of hunger." Then she wandered about, seeking a path, but she could find none.

When it was evening, she set herself down under a tree, and made up her mind to remain there, and not to go away, happen what might. But after she had been sitting there for some time, a little white dove came flying to her, with a small golden key in its bill. Then it dropped the key into the girl's hand, and said, "Do you see yonder large tree? on its side is a little rock; open it with this key, and you will find plenty of food, and will no longer suffer hunger."

Then the girl went to the tree and opened it, and found some milk in a little dish, and a loaf of white bread; so she had now plenty to eat and to drink. And when she had eaten her fill, she said, "The hens at home are all now going to roost; ah me! I am so tired,—could I but also lie down in my bed!"

Then the little dove came flying to her again, and brought another golden key in its bill, and said, "Open the tree, and you will find in it a bed." So she unlocked the tree, and found a beautiful soft little bed; then she said her prayers, lay down, and soon fell asleep.

The next morning the dove came a third time, brought again a little key,

and said, "Open the tree, and you will find in it a dress." And when the girl unlocked the tree, sure enough there she found a beautiful dress, trimmed with gold and precious stones, more splendid than any king's daughter ever had. So she lived in the wood for some time, and the dove came every day, and took care to provide all she wanted.

But one day the little dove came, and said, "Will you do me a kindness?" "With all my heart," answered the maiden. Then the dove said, "I will take you to a cottage; go into it, and you will see an old woman sitting on the hearth, who will bid you good day. But for your life's sake do not answer, what-

ever she may say or do. Go past her on the right hand, and there you will see a door; open it, and you will come into a little chamber, where a large heap of rings of all sorts are lying on the table. Amongst them are splendid rings with glittering stones; but let them lie, and seek out a plain ring, which is amongst the rest, and bring it to me here as fast as you can."

Then the maiden went to the cottage. There sat an old woman, who stared when she saw the girl, and said, "Good day, my child!" But the maiden gave no answer, and went straight past her up to the door. "Whither so fast?" cried the old woman; and she seized her

by the gown, and tried to hold her back. "This is my house, and nobody can come into it without my leave." The maiden however never opened her lips, but got away from the old woman, and went into the chamber. And there lay a great heap of rings upon the table, which glittered and quite dazzled her eyes; then she looked and looked everywhere amongst them for the plain ring, but could not find it.

As she was busily searching for the ring, she saw the old woman sneaking off with a birdcage in her hand, and trying to make her escape. So the girl ran up to her, and took the cage out of her hand; and when she lifted it up, and

peeped into it, there sat a bird with a plain ring in its bill. Then she took the ring, and ran out with it in great joy, thinking that the little white dove would come and fetch it, but it came not.

So the maiden leaned against a tree, waiting for the dove; and as she stood thus, the tree seemed to her to grow soft and flexible, and to let down its boughs. All at once the branches wound themselves around her, and behold they were two arms! And when she looked around, the tree was a handsome young man, who embraced and kissed her tenderly, and said, "I am a king's son, and thou hast freed me from the power of the old woman, who is a wicked fairy.

She had changed me into a tree, but every day for two hours I was a white dove; and as long as the old woman had the ring I could never regain my proper form."

Then his servants and horses were all freed from the spell, and were no longer trees. So the king' son drove off with the maiden to his kingdom, and they were married forthwith, and lived long and happily.

DUMMLING AND THE TOAD.

DUMMLING AND THE TOAD.

THERE was once a king who had three sons; two of whom were clever and cunning, but the third son spoke little, was almost a simpleton, and so they called him Dummling. Now when the king was grown old, he bethought him of his end, but he did not know to which of his sons he should leave his kingdom. So one day he called them to him and said, "Go out into the world, my sons, and whoever brings me the finest carpet shall be king after my death." And in order that there should

be no quarrel, he led them out before the castle, blew three feathers into the air, and said, "Whither these fly, ye shall hie." One feather flew toward the east, the other toward the west, but the third flew in a straight line, and soon fell to the ground. So the eldest brother went his way to the right, the second to the left, and they both laughed at Dummling, who had to stay where he was upon the ground with the third feather.

Dummling sat himself down and was sad at heart; when all on a sudden he saw a little door in the ground close to the feather. He opened it, and found

three steps, down which he went. Then he came to another door, at which he knocked; and he heard a voice from within saying,

"Little toad, little toad, see and say,
Who comes this way."

Then the door opened, and Dummling spied a great fat toad, and a number of little toads sitting around her. The fat toad asked Dummling what his business was, and he answered, "I want to find the finest and most beautiful carpet in the world." Then the old toad called a young one, and said,

"Little toad, little toad, hie and see,
And bring my box of treasures to me."

So the young toad hopped off, and presently brought back the box. The fat old toad opened the box, drew out a carpet, finer and more beautiful than any that could be woven in the loom, and gave it to Dummling. Then Dummling thanked her and went his way.

Now the other brothers had thought Dummling too great a simpleton to find any carpet to compare with theirs, and said one to the other, "Why need we trouble ourselves with seeking?" So they took from the first shepherd's wife whom they met the coarse shawl she had on, and brought it to the king. Presently came Dummling also, with his beautiful carpet; and when the king saw it he

was amazed, and said, "The kingdom shall belong to my youngest son."

But the two elder brothers let the king have no rest, telling him that it was not possible for Dummling to be king, and they begged him to grant them another trial. Then the king said, "He shall have the kingdom who brings me the most beautiful ring." And so saying he took the brothers into the courtyard, blew the three feathers again into the air, and bid them go their ways. Then the two eldest brothers went forth toward the east and west, and Dummling's feather again flew straight forward, and fell close to the little door in the ground. So Dummling went down

the steps to the fat toad, and told her that he was in search of the finest ring in the world. The toad ordered her large box to be brought, and took out of it a ring, which was finer than any goldsmith could make, and gave it to Dummling.

Now the two eldest brothers had laughed at the idea of Dummling's seeking for a gold ring; and they gave themselves no thought or trouble, but took the first cartwheels they met with, hammered the nails out of the iron hoops, and took them to the king. But as soon as Dummling came and pulled out his gold ring, the king said, "The kingdom must belong to Dummling."

The two eldest brothers, however, were not yet satisfied, and they plagued the king until he gave them another trial. So at last the king said, that whoever should bring him the most beautiful wife should have the crown: then he blew the three feathers again into the air, and they flew away as before.

Dummling went a third time to his old friend the toad, and said, "I must now find the handsomest wife in the world, and take her home with me." "The handsomest wife, indeed!" answered the toad; "well, you shall have her in a trice." And so saying, she gave him a large turnip, with six little mice harnessed to draw it. "Alas!" said

Dummling with a sigh, "what can I do with a turnip?" "Do what I bid you," replied the old toad; "now take one of my little toads and place her in the turnip." So Dummling took up one of the toads, as they sat in a ring, and placed it in the turnip; but hardly had he done so when the toad was changed into a beautiful maiden, the turnip into a handsome coach, and the six little mice into fine prancing horses. Then Dummling handed the little lady into the coach, and brought her to the king.

The other brothers came just at the same time; they had meanwhile not troubled themselves about Dummling's chance of finding a wife, but had taken

the first country girls they met on the road, and brought them home. Then the king said again, "The kingdom shall belong to Dummling after my death."

Nevertheless the two eldest brothers began to bluster anew, and said, "No, no, this must not and cannot be." So they proposed, that he should have the crown whose wife could leap through a ring which hung in the middle of the hall; for they thought to themselves, "Our lasses are stout and strong, and can jump through easily enough; but this delicate little creature will kill herself if she tries to leap." And at last the king consented; whereupon the two country wenches made a spring and

leaped through the ring; but being plump and clumsy, they fell to the ground and broke their arms and legs. Then the beautiful little lady whom Dummling had brought bounded gracefully through the ring, and gained the kingdom for Dummling; and when the old king died, Dummling received the crown, and ruled the kingdom well and wisely.

THE FOX'S BRUSH.

THE FOX'S BRUSH.

The King of the East had a beautiful garden, and in the garden stood a tree that bore golden apples. Lest any of these apples should be stolen, they were always counted; but about the time when they began to grow ripe, it was found that every night one of them was gone. The king became very angry at this, and told the gardener to keep a watch under the tree all night.

The gardener set his eldest son to watch, but about twelve o'clock he fell

asleep, and in the morning another of the apples was missing.

Then the second son was set to watch, and at midnight he too fell asleep, and in the morning another apple was gone.

Then the third son offered to keep watch; but the gardener at first would not let him, for fear some harm should come to him. However, at last he yielded, and the young man laid himself under the tree to watch. As the clock struck twelve he heard a rustling noise in the air, and a bird came flying and sat upon the tree. This bird's feathers were all of pure gold: and as it was snapping at one of the apples with its beak, the gardener's son jumped up and

shot an arrow at it. The arrow, however, did the bird no harm, it only dropped a golden feather from its tail, and flew away. The golden feather was then brought to the king in the morning, and all his court were called together. Every one agreed that it was the most beautiful thing that had ever been seen, and that it was worth more than all the wealth of the kingdom: but the king said, "One feather is of no use to me, I must and will have the whole bird."

Then the gardener's eldest son set out to find this golden bird, and thought to find it very easily; and when he had gone but a little way, he came to a wood, and by the side of the wood he saw a

fox sitting. The lad was fond of a little sporting, so he took his bow and made ready to shoot at it. Then Mr. Reynard, who saw what he was about, and did not like the thoughts of being shot at, cried out, "Softly, softly! do not shoot me; I can give you good counsel. I know what your business is, and that you want to find the golden bird. You will reach a village in the evening, and when you get there you will see two inns, built one on each side of the street. The right-hand one is very pleasant and beautiful to look at, but go not in there. Rest for the night in the other, though it may seem to you very poor and mean." "What can such a beast as this know about the

matter?" thought the silly lad to himself. So he shot his arrow at the fox, but he missed it, and it only laughed at him, set up its tail above its back, and ran into the wood.

The young man went his way, and in the evening came to the village where the two inns were. In the right hand one were people singing, and dancing, and feasting; but the other looked very dirty, and poor. "I should be very silly," said he, "if I went to that shabby house, and left this charming place:" so he went into the smart house, and ate and drank at his ease; and there he stayed, and forgot the bird and his country too.

Time passed on, and as the eldest son did not come back, and no tidings were heard of him, the second son set out, and the same thing happened to him. He met with the fox sitting by the road-side, who gave him the same good advice as he had given his brother: but when he came to the two inns, his eldest brother was standing at the window where the merry-making was, and called to him to come in; and he could not withstand the temptation, but went in, joined the merry-making, and there forgot the golden bird and his country in the same manner.

Time passed on again, and the youngest son too wished to set out into the wide

world, to seek for the golden bird; but his father would not listen to him for a long while, for he was very fond of his son, and was afraid that some ill-luck might happen to him also, and hinder his coming back. However, at last it was agreed he should go; for, to tell the truth, he would not rest at home. As he came to the wood he met the fox, who gave him the same good counsel that he had given the other brothers. But he was thankful to the fox, and did not shoot at him, as his brothers had done. Then the fox said, "Sit upon my tail, and you will travel faster." So he sat down: and the fox began to run, and away they went over stock and

stone, so quickly that their hair whistled in the wind.

When they came to the village, the young man was wise enough to follow the fox's counsel, and without looking about him, went straight to the shabby inn, and rested there all night at his ease. In the morning came the fox again, and met him as he was beginning his journey, and said, "Go straight forward till you come to a castle, before which lie a whole troop of soldiers fast asleep and snoring; take no notice of them, but go into the castle, and pass on and on till you come to a room where the golden bird sits in a wooden cage: close by it stands a beautiful gold-

en cage; but do not try to take the bird out of the shabby cage and put it into the handsome one, otherwise you will be sorry for it." Then the fox stretched out his brush again, and the young man sat himself down, and away they went over stock and stone, till their hair whistled in the wind.

Before the castle gate all was as the fox had said: so the lad went in, and found the chamber, where the golden bird hung in a wooden cage. Below stood the golden cage; and the three golden apples, that had been lost, were lying close by its side. Then he thought to himself, "It will be a very droll thing to bring away such a fine bird in this

shabby cage; so he opened the door and took hold of the bird, and put it into the golden cage. But it set up at once such a loud scream, that all the soldiers awoke; and they took him prisoner, and carried him before the king.

The next morning the court sat to judge him; and when all was heard, it doomed him to die, unless he should bring the king the golden horse, that could run as swiftly as the wind. If he did this he was to have the golden bird given him for his own.

So he set out once more on his journey, sighing, and in great despair; when on a sudden, he met his good friend the fox taking his morning's walk. "Hey-

day, young gentleman!" said Reynard; "you see now what has happened from your not listening to my advice. I will still, however, tell you how you may find the golden horse, if you will but do as I bid you. You must go straight on till you come to the castle where the horse stands in his stall. By his side will lie the groom fast asleep and snoring; take away the horse softly; but be sure to let the old leathern saddle be upon him, and do not put on the golden one that is close by." Then the young man sat down on the fox's tail; and away they went over stock and stone, till their hair whistled in the wind.

All went right, and the groom lay

snoring, with his hand upon the golden saddle. But when the lad looked at the horse, he thought it a great pity to keep the leathern saddle upon it. "I will give him the good one," said he: "I am sure he is worth it." As he took up the golden saddle, the groom awoke, and cried out so loud, that all the guards ran in and took him prisoner; and in the morning he was brought before the king's court to be judged, and was once more doomed to die. But it was agreed that if he could bring thither the beautiful princess, he should live, and have the horse given him for his own.

Then he went his way again very sorrowful; but the old fox once more met

him on the road, and said, "Why did you not listen to me? If you had, you would have carried away both the bird and the horse. Yet I will once more give you counsel. Go straight on, and in the evening you will come to a castle. At twelve o'clock every night the princess goes to the bath: go up to her as she passes, and give her a kiss, and she will let you lead her away; but take care you do not let her go and take leave of her father and mother." Then the fox stretched out his tail, and away they went over stock and stone till their hair whistled again.

As they came to the castle all was as the fox had said; and at twelve o'clock

the young man met the princess going to the bath, and gave her the kiss; and she agreed to run away with him, but begged with many tears that he would let her take leave of her father. At first he said, "No!" but she wept still more and more, and fell at his feet, till at last he yielded; but the moment she came to her father's door the guards awoke, and he was taken prisoner again.

So he was brought at once before the king, who lived in that castle. And the king said, "You shall never have my daughter, unless in eight days you dig away the hill that stops the view from my window." Now this hill was so big that all the men in the whole world could

not have taken it away: and when he had worked for seven days, and had done very little, the fox came and said, "Lie down and go to sleep! I will work for you." In the morning he awoke, and the hill was gone; so he went merrily to the king, and told him that now it was gone he must give him the princess.

Then the king was obliged to keep his word, and away went the young man and the princess. But the fox came and said to him, "That will not do; we will have all three,—the princess, the horse, and the bird." "Ah!" said the young man, "that would be a great thing; but how can it be?"

"If you will only listen," said the fox,

"it can soon be done. When you come to the king of the castle where the golden horse is, and he asks for the beautiful princess, you must say, 'Here she is!' Then he will be very glad to see her, and will run to welcome her; and you will mount the golden horse that they are to give you, and put out your hand to take leave of them; but shake hands with the princess last. Then lift her quickly on to the horse, behind you; clap your spurs to his side, and gallop away as fast as you can."

All went right: then the fox said, "When you come to the castle where the bird is, I will stay with the princess at the door, and you will ride in and

speak to the king; and when he sees that it is the right horse, he will bring out the bird: but you must sit still, and say that you want to look at it, to see whether it is the true golden bird or not; and when you get it into your hand, ride away as fast as you can."

This, too, happened as the fox said: they carried off the bird; the princess mounted again, and off they rode till they came to a great wood. On their way through it they met their old friend Reynard again; and he said, "Pray kill me, and cut off my head and my brush!" The young man would not do any such thing to so good a friend: so the fox said, "I will at any rate give you good

counsel: beware of two things! ransom no one from the gallows, and sit down by the side of no brook!" Then away he went. "Well," thought the young man, "it is no hard matter, at any rate, to follow that advice."

So he rode on with the princess, till at last they came to the village where he had left his two brothers. And there he heard a great noise and uproar: and when he asked what was the matter, the people said, "Two rogues are going to be hanged." As he came nearer, he saw that the two men were his brothers, who had turned robbers. At the sight of them in this sad plight his heart was very heavy, and he cried out, "Can noth-

ing save them from such a death?" but the people said "No!" unless he would bestow all his money upon the rascals, and buy their freedom, by repaying all they had stolen. Then he did not stay to think about it, but paid whatever was asked; and his brothers were given up, and went on with him toward their father's home.

Now the weather was very hot; and as they came to the wood where the fox first met them, they found it so cool and shady under the trees, by the side of a brook that ran close by, that the two brothers said, "Let us sit down by the side of this brook and rest a while, to eat and drink." "Very well!" said he,

and he forgot what the fox had said, and sat down on the side of the brook: and while he thought of no harm coming to him they crept behind him, and threw him down the bank, and took the princess, the horse, and the bird, and went home to the king their master, and said, "All these we have won by our own skill and strength." Then there was great merriment made, and the king held a feast, and the two brothers were welcomed home; but the horse would not eat, the bird would not sing, and the princess sat by herself in her chamber, and wept bitterly.

The youngest son fell to the bottom of the bed of the stream. Luckily, it

was nearly dry, but his bones were almost broken, and the bank was so steep that he could find no way to get out. As he stood bewailing his fate, and thinking what he should do, to his great joy he spied his old and faithful friend the fox, looking down from the bank upon him. Then Reynard scolded him for not following his advice, which would have saved him from all the troubles that had befallen him. "Yet," said he, "silly as you have been, I cannot bear to leave you here; so lay hold of my brush, and hold fast!" Then he pulled him out of the river, and said to him, as he got upon the bank, "Your brothers have set a watch to kill you if

they find you making your way back." So he dressed himself as a poor piper, and came playing on his pipe to the king's court. But he was scarcely within the gate when the horse began to eat, and the bird to sing, and the princess left off weeping. And when he got to the great hall, where all the court sat feasting, he went straight up to the king, and told him all his brothers' roguery. Then it made the king very angry to hear what they had done, and they were seized and punished; and the youngest son had the princess given to him again; and he married her; and after the king's death he was chosen king in his stead.

After his marriage he went one day

to walk in the wood, and there the old fox met him once more, and besought him, with tears in his eyes, to be so kind as to cut off his head and his brush. At last he did so, though sorely against his will, and in the same moment the fox was changed into a prince, and the princess knew him to be her own brother, who had been lost a great many years; for a spiteful fairy had enchanted him, with a spell that could only be broken by some one getting the golden bird, and by cutting off his head and his brush.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

MANY friends who have seen the interpretation of the Story of the Red Book of Appin, have strongly urged the author of that interpretation to furnish some notes for understanding the other stories, printed in the little volume with that story, beyond the few hints at the close of the prefatory remarks; and he has concluded to do so. His readers, he hopes, will understand and make allowances for the difficulty of providing what is called the public with an interpretation which shall avoid the "two extremes" of being too abstruse and obscure on the one side, or too simple and open on the other,—as some readers may not

need an explanation at all, while others may not be introduced into the meaning of the stories by any attempt whatever at an interpretation. Those who are yet in the earlier period of life do not see with the same eyes as those who have entered upon their second childhood; and who can estimate the variety of powers of insight between these stages or conditions of life?

The writer would gladly furnish, if practicable, some distinct rules by which the sense of such Fairy Stories as have any sense at all might come to light, but this is hardly possible, beyond directing the reader to study the sense of the stories in their own spirit, under the law of "the possibilities of nature," divesting himself for the time being of such acquired notions as put shackles upon the

freedom of the spirit; we mean of a genuine spirit of truth; for this alone is the spirit of freedom. In reading these simple Fairy Tales, many have only to be told that the stories are not mere products of an unregulated imagination, having no view to nature and life; and upon this suggestion alone, the true sense may become apparent; if not wholly, at least to such a degree as to awaken a better feeling than mere curiosity, and then some progress may be made in opening the interior life which they veil.

We would earnestly urge, however, that no one should hastily conclude that he fully understands these stories; for while many of them enclose only some simple moral, quite accessible to an every-day reader, there are others again which reach beyond the sound-

ings of such exercises of intellect as are usually employed in what is commonly called the philosophy of mind ; and this is not said in any vaunting spirit, or to depreciate the dignity or the value of a legitimate use of the reason, but as a gentle warning, to all those who undertake to explore "these hidden or unseen paths of nature," that they are absolutely closed to mere pride of intellect.

Let the reader understand the true import of the language of the gospels, enforced as it is in every variety of form—except ye become as little children [or, as innocent as children] ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Let him understand what is meant by the expression—the children's bread [or doctrine of truth]. Let him feel that he has a personal interest in receiving

the doctrines of truth as if addressed directly to his own soul ; and if, at first, the ground under him shall seem to be shaken, he need be no further concerned at this, than to regard it as a solemn caution, that he keep his eye steadily upon the star in the East, and follow it obediently until he comes out of what is so often called a *wood* or a *forest*, in these simple tales, where these expressions almost invariably mean the every-day world, in whose mazy windings so many are lost.

In many of these stories we see a *lost one* represented as ascending *a tree*, the figure of a *rooted* principle ; whence he discerns, as if in the distance, a glimmering light, a figure also ; and, it may be, a figure of the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, which guided the children of Israel from the bond-

age of Egypt to the Holy Land or land of Holiness.

In order to illustrate a point here indicated, we will recite a very short story, which however is full of meaning; and we will place interrogation marks where we think the reader may with profit consider what is intended. The story is from the collection edited by the brothers Grimm, as it reads in the translation published by Crosby & Nichols, 1862, entitled German Popular Tales. It is called:

THE FLAIL WHICH CAME FROM THE CLOUDS.

A countryman once drove his plough with a pair of oxen [?], and when he came about the middle of his fields [?], the horns of his two beasts [?] began to grow, and grow, till

they were so high that when he went home he could not get them into the stable door [?]. By good luck just then a Butcher [?] passed by, to whom he gave up his beasts [?] and struck a bargain, that he should take to the Butcher a measure full of Turnip seed [?], for every grain of which the Butcher should give him a Brabant dollar. That is what you may call a good bargain! The countryman went home, and came again, carrying on his back a measure of seed, out of which he dropped one grain on the way [?]. The Butcher, however, reckoned out for every seed a Brabant dollar; and had not the countryman lost one he would have received a dollar more. Meanwhile the seed which he dropped on the road had grown up a fine tree, reaching into the clouds [?]. So the

countryman thought to himself he might as well see what the people in the clouds were about. Up he climbed, and at the top [?] he found a field [?], with some people thrashing oats [?]; but while he was looking at them he felt the tree shake beneath him [?], and, peeping downwards, he perceived that some one was on the point of chopping down the tree at the roots [?]. "If I am thrown down," said the countryman, "I shall have a bad fall;" and, quite bewildered, he could think of nothing else to save himself than to make a rope with the oat straw [?], which laid about in heaps. He then seized hold of a hatchet [?] and flail [?] which were near him, and let himself down by his straw rope. He fell into a deep, deep hole in the earth [?], and found it very lucky that he had

brought the hatchet with him; for with it he cut steps [?], and so mounted again into the broad daylight, bringing with him the flail [?] for a sign [?] of the truth of his tale, which nobody, on that account, was able to doubt!

There is a wonderful adventure!!!

Wonderful, indeed! but is it more wonderful than that man should carry within himself a certain something, which, rightly understood, will certify to him an origin, not in the clouds indeed, but above them? What is it in man whose office it is (figured by a *flail*) to separate the wheat from the chaff? and why is it that this flail is said to have been brought down from the clouds, and why is its nature appealed to as the evidence that it did so come from above?

As light and apparently frivolous as this story is, it presents a subject for the gravest reflection, and raises questions which can only be solved in the depths of one's own consciousness in moments of solemn meditation.

The *two* oxen may be considered the two elder brothers (so called) in many of these stories. They are the two principles which St. Paul describes as contending within him, and which continue to contend until mastered by a third principle, usually described as the younger of three sons. In mid life the *horns* of the oxen are said to grow and grow until they overpass the humility proper to a spirit of truth; they cannot be got into the "stable door." They are then said to be sold to a Butcher; or in other words, they are *denied*, and given over to death—or, as will be seen

in the story of the Fox's Brush, they are "cut off." From the multitude of principles in man (the measure of turnip seed), one is "cast upon the waters," and who can tell what may spring from even one true principle sown in life? The seed soon appears as a tree, rooted indeed in the earth, but sending its branches into heaven. (The seeds had a uniform value, and any one of them might have sent the countryman's vision into the upper air.) The man, in some spiritual sense, *climbs up* the tree, and discovers that, above, or in the spirit life, there are those who are employed in separating the goats from the sheep,—called thrashing out oats. But then it is seen, that a principle, whose roots are in the *natural* earth, is constantly being undermined, and may give a "bad fall" to who-

ever looks for support from it ; and the countryman determines to spring from it, even with such aid as may be had from mere straw gathered *above.* This, it is true, lets him down into the depths of mother earth, out of which he works his way into daylight by his intellectual hatchet ; but he has brought with him one indisputable evidence (to himself) of his descent from a higher life, and an assurance that he shall in due season return to it.

This Flail figures under so many forms in these Fairy Tales, that it would be an endless task to point them out. In one place it is represented in a strangely fantastic story by a man who cannot be made to *shiver*—whereas we read that the wicked flee when no man pursueth.

Let it be understood, however, that we are not defending, but explaining this mode of writing: it will defend itself, and will have children for its patrons, in more than one sense.

Here is another story, which may seem too ridiculous to arrest the attention of any sensible man; but the reader may be assured that it was designed to exhibit one of the profoundest problems in nature, the solution of which will place any one in the proper condition to answer, as in the Story of the Fox's Brush, "Here she is." The story is called:

THE HEDGEHOG AND THE HARE.

This story, in telling it, sounds very like a

fable, but nevertheless it is all perfectly true ; for my grandfather, from whom I had it, used always to say, as he told it to me chuckling with glee, "It must be true, my son, otherwise how could one tell it ?" The story ran thus :

It was a Sunday morning in harvest time, just as the buckwheat was coming into blossom : the sun had risen into the sky, clear and bright, the morning wind swept over the stubble, the larks sang merrily as they rose into the air, the bees hummed busily in the buckwheat, and the countryfolks were going to church all drest in their Sunday clothes ; all creatures were merry-minded, and the hedgehog too.

The hedgehog stood before his door with his arms folded, looked up into the morning

breeze, and hummed a little tune to himself, neither better nor worse than a hedgehog is used to sing on a fine Sunday morning. And as he was thus singing to himself, it all at once came into his head, that whilst his wife was washing and dressing the children, he might as well go and take a ramble in the fields, and look after his crop of turnips. Now the turnips were close by his house, and he used to eat them with his family; therefore he looked upon them as his own.

No sooner said than done. The hedgehog fastened the door after him, and went his way into the field. He had not gone far from home, and was just waddling round a little copsewood which lay before the turnip field, when his neighbor the hare crossed his path, who had come out on a like errand, to look

after his cabbages. When the hedgehog spied the hare, he wished him a friendly good morning. But the hare, who was a great man in his way, and vastly proud, did not deign to return the hedgehog's greeting, but turning up his nose in a scornful manner, he merely said to the hedgehog, "How comes it that you are running about the fields so early in the morning?" "I am going to take a little walk," said the hedgehog. "A walk forsooth!" said the hare laughing; "methinks you might put your legs to some better use."

This answer disgusted the hedgehog greatly; anything else he could have borne, but of his legs he would not hear a word in disparagement, just because they were by nature short. "Do you flatter yourself," said he to

the hare, "that you can do more with your legs?" "I fancy so indeed," said the hare. "That remains to be seen," answered the hedgehog; "I lay you a wager that I would beat you in a race." "Ha! ha! ha!" said the hare, holding his sides with laughter; "you are a funny fellow, with your short legs! but with all my heart, so let it be, if you are so anxious to be beaten: what shall the wager be?" "A golden guinea and a bottle of brandy," said the hedgehog. "Agreed!" said the hare, "let us start at once." "Nay," said the hedgehog, "not quite so fast if you please; I have not tasted any food this morning, and will first go home and eat a bit of breakfast; in half an hour I will be here again."

So saying the hedgehog went his way

home, as the hare was content; and on his way he thought to himself, "The hare trusts to his long legs, but I will be up with him nevertheless. He gives himself the airs of a fine gentleman truly, yet he is but a sorry fellow after all: we shall see who will win the wager!"

Now when the hedgehog reached home he called his wife, and said, "Wife, dress yourself quickly; you must go with me into the field hard by." "What's in the wind now?" said the wife. The hedgehog answered, "I have wagered with the hare a golden guinea and a bottle of brandy that I will run a race with him, and you must stand by and see us run." "Mercy upon us, man," cried his wife, "are you stark mad? How could you think for a minute of running a race with the

hare?" "Hold your tongue, wife," said the hedgehog; "that is my affair: do not meddle and make in a man's business." What could the hedgehog's wife do? she was obliged to follow, whether she would or no.

As they were jogging along together, the hedgehog said to his wife, "Listen now to what I say. Look,—we shall run our race up yonder long field: the hare will run in one furrow and I in another, and we shall start from the top of the field. Now you have only to sit quietly in the furrow at the further end, and when the hare comes up on the other side, call out to him, 'Here I am!'"

By this time they had reached the spot; the hedgehog placed his wife in the furrow, and then went up the field. When he came

there, the hare was already on the ground. "Shall we start?" said the hare. "With all my heart," said the hedgehog. "Make ready then!" So each one took up his place in the furrow. The hare counted "One! two! three!" and away he went like a flash of lightning down the field. But the hedgehog only ran about three steps, then squatted down in the furrow, and sat as still as a mouse.

Now when the hare at full speed reached the end of the field, the hedgehog's wife called out, "Here I am, waiting for you!" The hare started, and was not a little amazed, fully believing that it was the hedgehog himself who called to him; for, as every one knows, the hedgehog's wife is for all the world like her husband.

But the hare thought to himself, "There must be some mistake here." So he cried, "Turn about and run again!" And away he went like an arrow from a bow, till his ears whistled in the wind; but the hedgehog's wife stayed quietly in her place. Now when the hare came to the top of the field, the hedgehog cried out, "Hallo, here I am; where have you been all this while?" But the hare was out of his wits, and cried out, "Once more! turn about, and away!" "By all means," answered the hedgehog; "for my part, as often as you please." So the hare went on running backwards and forwards three-and-seventy times; the seventy-fourth time, however, he did not reach the end of the field; in the middle of the furrow he dropped down dead. But the hedgehog took the

golden guinea and the bottle of brandy he had won, called his wife out of the furrow, and away they jogged merrily home together ; and if they are not dead they are living still.

To the solution of the question presented in this story the reader must bring into exercise his most earnest and meditative attention, lest, like the hare, he too die exhausted, in the "middle of his furrow," without understanding in what sense *the hedgehog's wife is for all the world like her husband.* Let the reader ponder the passages—Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

There is no design, by this reference to

the spirit breathings of the Psalmist, to bring his unapproachable beauties down to the level of the story just recited ; but it is true nevertheless, that the story was designed to convey, and did convey to the initiated, a sense of that eternal presence, from which no man can escape, and to set forth the doctrine that, go where he will, he may still hear a mysterious voice calling out to him—"Here I am."

But we will proceed without further preface to our present purpose, and will point out such leading features of the four stories printed with that of the Red Book of Appin, as may convince the well-disposed and serious student that many of the Fairy Tales of the middle ages had a deep religious purpose, and

must have been addressed to a class of persons, who are indeed in some sense still living in their successors, but who have lost sight of the history and the design of these simple, and, to the natural eye, very fantastic stories, often made so, in order that, at the time they were written, the profane should not be made more accursed by being led to assume the possession of a knowledge, said to belong alone to the children of light, who were unwilling to cast it before those whom they figuratively called dogs and swine.

INTERPRETATION

OF THE STORY OF

THE SIX SWANS.

[Page 61.]

We have stated in the preface to the Story of the Red Book of Appin, page 16, that the story of the "Six Swans" was designed to illustrate the case of a man who has commenced a "hunt," or a search in the "large forest" of the world, after a "stag," and the stag may figure *truth*, or *wisdom*, or *the way of life.* In the "evening" (of life), the man is represented as stopping his "horse," that is, himself, and as having discovered that he has lost his way. He has mistaken the object of life, or the way to it, and has followed his individual genius so exclusively, that he now finds himself quite alone, separated from those who began life with him,—most of whom may be considered as

similarly isolated in the world, either intellectually or affectionally. He now looks on all sides of him for a solution of the problem of life, "but all in vain."

He may be considered as represented in the Story of Faust in his library, having exhausted philosophy, and medicine, and "to his cost" theology, only to find out at last that he is just "as wise as he was before," and knows nothing at all. In this state, an evil nature within the learned man in his library, rises up and is personified in Mephistopheles, &c.

In a somewhat similar manner in this Fairy Story, a spirit of evil appears to the lost man, and is personified in the "old woman with a shaking head," who is called a witch. She represents the world and its witcheries in an outward and bad sense; but the world would have no power for mischief over man if there were no principles in man to which the world appeals and finds a response. A compact is now entered into with the old woman, resulting in an offer,

Page 62, on the part of the old woman (or the world), of her daughter as the wife, or the object of

love to the king, that is, to the man who is the subject of the story.

Page 63. This daughter is what is understood to be SIN. It is a love of the world as opposed to or as not being the love of God; and her "beauty" is simply the fascinations of the world, its pleasures, its honors, &c., to one who yields to them beyond the dictates of reason and conscience. The King's "palace" is his *heart;* and the "marriage" signifies that the man has taken the love of the world into his affections.

In many places of Scripture, marriage is simply a figurative expression for love; and hence, for a Jew to take a wife among *strangers*, means to take to one's heart an object of affection forbidden to the people of God. This will be found to explain much peculiar language in Scripture, as in the 16th chap. of Ezekiel and elsewhere.

We now come to that portion of the story (page 63), which represents that the man had been married once before, and that his first wife had brought him six boys and a little girl, "whom he loved more than the whole world besides." These seven children represent the

four cardinal and the three theological virtues, PRUDENCE, TEMPERANCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY,—CHARITY being represented by the little girl, the greatest of all, and the principle of Love and of LIFE itself.

These seven are the seven "champions," so called, "of Christendom," and a due acquaintance with the part they perform in spiritual life, will furnish the key for understanding the celebrated allegory under this title. They are also the seven Sleepers of whom even Gibbon condescended to write, for they sometimes sleep, but never die. They are more patriarchal in the world than the Patriarchs themselves.

On this page (63) we see that the man was conscious of the evil influences of a worldly life, without, at first, losing his affection for right principles, which,

Page 64, he wishes to preserve, reserving a place for them in the lonely or secret chamber of his "castle" [or heart]: but they are now there, not by the power of life, but by the strength of memory, which is soon to fade. The clew of thread is, of course, the conscience, with which a "wise woman" (nature) had

endowed him, by which he was enabled to recall [or "visit"] his better thoughts.

But no man can serve God and mammon for any length of time, without losing his godly thoughts or virtues, in proportion as habit makes him familiar with the attractions of the world; and this finally proceeds to such an extent that evil habits, represented as "shirts" woven by sin, who is now the queen, and the stepmother of the little girl, quite transforms the character of her six brethren,

Page 66, and they are said to be "changed into swans," and to fly away over the wood. In this condition of things the man is said to "visit" his children; that is, to recall his better thoughts; but the little girl, in the character of *conscience*, tells him of the sad effects of sin, showing him,

Page 67, external *signs*, which are figured as "feathers" picked up in the "court yard;" for sin does not enter into the *shekinah* of the heart without driving out the presiding spirit altogether.

On this page (67), we see represented the "great dread" which a spirit of innocence has for the contam-

inations of a corrupt world; and we see how the conscience pleads and implores not to be thrown out of the "castle" [or heart]. We see also how the convictions of the conscience make the man "sad;" but this sadness, we see, leads him to the wise resolution,—"I will go and seek my brothers;"—that is, the man determines to make an effort to recover his better thoughts, and return to a better life.

Page 68. We now see the man, under the guidance of his better thoughts passing into the "lonely cottage" [or closet] of his inner nature, and he ascends "up the stairs" to his superior or higher life, where he discovers what may be called the principles of the virtues, their "forms" according to the language of the schools, the virtues themselves being absent. These now come before him in his serious meditations; but they are seen in their changed condition as "swans," and are represented as seating themselves on the "ground," to express that humility of the man which, in the spiritual history of the soul, performs so important a part in the restoration of fallen man to a better life: and now the man has a clear vision of the virtues for a brief pe-

riod in their true character, and the "little maiden," the conscience or the spiritual life, recognizes the connection of the virtues with itself: they are brethren of one family.

Page 69 is a dramatic scene to introduce the doctrine of the "six days'" work or labor, in which (page 70) the principle of truth must be engaged in making (that is, the man must be engaged in acquiring) new habits of life, to be woven of "star-flowers," or heavenly thoughts, with which to bring back the brethren [that is, the virtues], into their primal state.

Each of the six days is designated, sometimes, as an evening and a morning, the evening (or darkness) figuring the trial, and the morning (or light) signifying the victory, each trial and victory constituting a day (or a year), in which each virtue perfects its work, the whole six labors ending in a Sabbath, or rest, proper to Charity, as the principle and consummation of all good.

And now we see the *great resolve* which lies at the root of so much true excellence in life—the great resolve to build up a true character, "even if it should

cost [as the story reads] life itself;" for in this state of the soul, life is seen to have no value except in its truth and virtue.

On *page* 71, another king would seem to be introduced; but it is the same man in a changed character. He is now seeking a better life, and he discovers the little maiden, truth, in the upper branches of a tree,—a tree being the figure or symbol of a sure principle rooted in the firm earth. As yet he is *purblind*, and does not clearly know or recognize the object of his search; which is figured by her making no answer to the call, "who art thou?" She refuses also to "come down," but the man receives some external symbols of the truth, represented as being thrown down from the tree.

Page 72. The truth in its simplicity is not recognized by the man of the world, when he first goes in search of it, not even when really in its presence. It is covered with a "little shift" (or seamless coat), and it remains in its elevation, compelling those who would have access to it, to "climb up" to it; neither can the man hold free converse with it. All the languages of

the *world* will not enable any one to hold converse with the truth. The little maid remains "dumb as a fish;" and she will continue to remain dumb, until those who seek her acquire some skill in her own language. In plain words, the merely worldly man cannot speak (or feel) the language (that is, the spirit) of holiness. But whilst this is so, it is quite within the power of nature to fall in love with the beauty of holiness, through an acquaintance with its external manifestations; and this is what, we now see, takes place, the man being represented as bringing the silent little maiden to his palace, that is, to his heart. Then a sense of her beauty grows upon him and shines

Page 73, "like the bright day;" and the marriage is celebrated. But still she will not speak until she can be understood, and she cannot be understood except by a heart in the right state for it; but this cannot be until the work of redemption is carried on to perfection.

And now we see illustrated the doctrine that the coming of Christ, or the Spirit of Truth, brings a *sword* into the soul: it stirs up contention between the good

and the evil principles, in order to a separation from the latter, who are here personified in the "wicked mother," who is represented as "very angry,"—because of the marriage of the man to the little maiden, that is, the marriage of the soul to truth.

Pages 73, '4, & '5, give us the image of the three trials to which the truth is subjected, before it can be valued as *thrice refined* gold, or goodness. The three children of divine truth may be considered as Faith, Hope, and Charity, although there is no occasion to suppose that these *three* are precisely referred to in this part of the story. We may perfectly see the true spirit of the story without being precise on this point.

We see, *page* 73, that the Spirit of Truth is brought to the deepest point of depression the last day of the six years (or days) of labor, before the dawning of the Sabbath or rest, which is now nearly attained. This is according to the truth of nature; for the soul may enter upon the work of regeneration with some cheerfulness, and not discover the magnitude of the undertaking until the close of the divine work is approached. But one of the shirts wants a sleeve: which indicates that

no man, while in the body, wears a perfect robe of righteousness. There is always something to save him from the sin of pride.

Page 76. But now the little shirts, or the habits of life woven with star-flowers, or heavenly thoughts, are as perfect as the imperfect nature of man will permit. The truth is revealed or comes into light, and

Page 77. the children of truth are recovered, which the man, whilst under the influence of the world, could not preserve or protect, and all of the mysteries connected with the experience of the past are explained. The old man is put off; and the new man enters into the new life, and lives many years in "peace and happiness."

Such we take to be the meaning of this fairy tale of the Six Swans; if not perfectly accurate in all its details, and not entirely complete in touching upon all the shades of meaning in the story, yet, in the main, we are very sure that this interpretation will bear examination, and that the story must gain in beauty and interest under this method of exposition.

INTERPRETATION

OF THE STORY OF

THE WHITE DOVE.

[Page 81.]

The "young girl" may represent a divine faith; or we may call it a spirit of truth. She is the *Orphan Boy* of the story of the Red Book of Appin (p. 32). She is represented as riding in a "coach" (the man) with her "master and mistress" (body and soul) through a "large wood" (the world); and in the "middle of the wood" (or in mid-life), the man is assailed by a "band of robbers," (that is, of pleasures or worldly temptations), and they "kill" (or destroy) whatever there was good in the man which came under their influence. "Thus all were killed" or destroyed, except the maid (or the principle of truth itself), which, when assailed by "violence," is sometimes saved by seeking refuge in itself as a firmly rooted principle,—here, as elsewhere

in so many of these stories, figured by a "tree," behind which the "maid" is represented as hiding herself.

When the robbers had gone off, the maid is represented as "coming out," and as seeing the "dreadful deed" that had been done,—which means, that when the passions, the robbers in the case, had subsided, the man awakes to consciousness; and the spirit of truth, in the form of the conscience, tells him of the mischief that had been done. This is now followed by a penitent spirit, represented by the maid as "weeping bitterly," and,

Page 82. the man is described, still under the form of the "poor girl," as wandering in the "wood" (of life) "seeking a path, but finding none."

This is what, in alchemy, is called the black state of the *matter* of the philosopher's stone, which is said to be a necessary preparative to what is called the white state,—the white state being one of pure resolves to "abide" by some fixed and determinate principle of truth and goodness. The name of this black state in Scripture, is simply repentance, a call to which is the office of John the Baptist, or of the letter of the divine

law of Moses, who is to introduce one whose shoe's latchet the Baptist is not worthy to unloose.

The next step in the development exhibits the man in the execution of the "great resolve;" the maid seats herself, that is, the man seats himself under a tree, the tree, as we have already said, being the figure of a firmly rooted principle; and he determines to abide by it and "not to go away, happen what might."

The mystical writers have much to say of this, it being the beginning of a "new life," and it is all-important that it should be entered upon in a clear purpose pointing to but one thing, absolutely separated from all admixture with what is called a love of the world. When the seat under the tree is properly assumed, the injunction in the gospel is complied with:—the man *denies* himself, determined to stand upon the principle, that is, upon the spirit of truth, which truly points to the cross of Christ; for this is what a seat under the tree implies.

The man may therefore be here considered as standing upon the cross within the charmed circle, as represented in the Story of the Red Book of Appin (note

13, page 40). The maid, that is, the man, now under the influence or guidance of the virgin (truth), having passed through the spiritual baptism, is prepared for receiving a visitation of the Holy Spirit, which accordingly comes to him under the form, or in the symbol of the *white dove*, bearing the golden key in its bill, by which the spiritual treasures of life are to be opened. The golden key is dropped into the "girl's hand;" and as the hand is the symbol of power (note 20, page 48), we here see the man endowed with spiritual power; and now his inward, or spiritual eye, being turned in the right direction, he sees the "large tree," or, in other words, he recognizes the universal spirit, the Spirit of God.

This is the water of which we read,—"whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The man is here commanded by the dove to open the tree with the golden key, and with a promise that he shall "find plenty of food, and shall no longer suffer hunger."

Page 83. The man opens the tree and finds, according to the promise, "some milk in a little dish [the heart] and a loaf of white bread" [or pure doctrine]. This is the milk and the bread, let the reader not be startled, of which it is said, or which, personified, says of itself,—"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "So the maid had now plenty to eat and to drink." It may be well enough to say here that the kind of hunger and thirst thus relieved, is the hunger and thirst after righteousness.

But the man not alone requires spiritual sustenance; he needs rest or repose of the spirit, which also is to be obtained from the same "large tree" from which he receives the inexhaustible food.

Before opening the tree with the second key, the reflection is induced,—"The hens at home are now all going to roost; ah me! (says the maiden), I am so tired,—could I but also lay down in my bed!" So was it with the Son of man. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Now the white dove, or Divine Spirit, delivers to the tired wanderer the second golden key, with the command to open the tree; and this being done, the maid finds a "beautiful soft little bed," in which the pious spirit finds the repose promised in the words,—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

We now come to the fruit of the third key, which is delivered into the *hand* of the maiden the "next morning." This is a significant expression, the next morning, for the meaning of which the reader is referred to note 14, page 40, of the Story of the Red Book.

Page 84. It must be noticed that the three keys (of the Trinity) all open and give entrance to the same tree, the tree of life, the third key providing the "beautiful dress" [the robe of righteousness] "more splendid than any king's daughter ever had." And now the maid lives for some time in the wood (or the world), the dove, like Elijah's raven, providing "all she wanted."

We see, however, that in all spiritual histories the

truth is perfected in "affliction" and in "trials;" and accordingly we now see that the maid does not escape without her trial. She is sent into the world; but with a caution, "for her life's sake," not to make any answer when accosted by the old woman, who here figures the *fine gentleman* of the Story of the Red Book (note 5, p. 34).

Page 85. She is to pass by the old woman on the *right* hand (leaving the goats to take the left), and she is to enter the "little chamber" of her heart, now purified and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and there she is to see its "rings" (or principles) in the greatest profusion, and an abundance of glittering stones (or truths). From these she is commanded to select a "plain" ring, the emblem of simplicity, the characteristic of a "right spirit."

Page 86. Everything happens as the dove, that is, as the spirit directs; but,—and this seems strange at first,—the maid does not find among her spiritual treasures, the *plain* ring, or a perfect humility, and why was this? It was because she had not even yet entirely and absolutely emptied her heart of all tincture or

touch of worldliness. If the reader will examine his own heart attentively, be he never so good, he may find the key for understanding the representation by which we see the old woman (*page* 86) "sneaking off with a bird cage in her hand and trying to make her escape with it." But the girl runs up to her and takes the cage out of her hand, and lifting it up,

Page 87. and peeping into it, she discovers a bird with a plain ring in its bill. This she rescues from the grasp of the old woman, as the Orphan Boy rescues the Red Book in a similar sense from the *fine gentleman.*

This indicates that the life has not been as yet perfect, and that the spiritual vision is not yet entirely clarified. The maid does not yet know the true character of the dove, and that it is the *Flail* from heaven, whose office it is to separate the wheat from the chaff. She is therefore represented as still feeling the need of external support, expecting from the dove some farther counsel; and in the mean time she "leans" against a tree, the principle she began with, in her spiritual experience.

But now we see the spiritual miracle. As the maid

leans against the tree "it seems to her to grow soft and flexible, and to let down its boughs; and all at once, the branches wind themselves around the maiden, and behold they are two arms. And when she looked around, the tree had become a handsome young man," who declares himself a king's son,—and does the reader need to be told that this king's son is the Prince of Peace?

Page 88. In the explanation that follows, we may see that the principle of truth is perhaps never entirely smothered in the world, though, as in the case of the widow's only son, it sometimes *sleepeth;* and all men, if they will examine themselves, may find brief periods, or intervals of, it may be, "two hours," in which, in one form or another, they become conscious of a diviner life than can be found in the love of the world, in any of its attractions whatever; and by the light of that diviner life they may see all nature a living whole obeying faithfully the eternal Spirit of God, in which all men may become one united brotherhood. John xvii. 21.

We pronounce here no opinion upon the excellency or the insufficiency of the mode of teaching exhibited in this Fairy Story; but that its purpose was to illustrate the action of the Divine Spirit upon the soul of man, there surely cannot be a shadow of doubt.

INTERPRETATION

OF THE STORY OF

DUMMLING AND THE TOAD.

[Page 91.]

The King in this story, as usual, represents man; and he is said to have three sons; or, in other words, man is an image of the Trinity, which, for purposes of study, but not in any definite sense, may be considered as set forth in the body, soul, and spirit. Two are spoken of as clever, meaning in a worldly sense; but the third, representing the spirit, and which primarily may be called the conscience, is exhibited as "almost a simpleton," to convey the idea that the conscience always acts with the greatest possible simplicity and directness. It knows of no windings, and flies the touch of all worldly suggestions counselling duplicity. It will lead in a divine silence those who obediently

follow it; but in a mystical sense it dies when disobeyed, or then only appears under other forms to haunt the soul with the ghosts of murdered principles of goodness.

The man is represented as if in doubt as to what principle should be regarded as of highest authority in life. Of course, this must be considered a theoretical fiction for the purpose of illustrating something. In the interpretation of these Fairy fictions something must be allowed to the *framework* or the *setting* in which the spirit of the story is to be sought.

"Go out into the world, my sons (says the man) and whoever brings me the finest carpet shall be king after my death." A carpet is something to walk upon, and here figures the finest (or best) walk in life. It should be something which says to us—"This is the way, walk ye (on) it." Isa. xxx. 21. To the Jew the divine Law was the only carpet prepared for the walk, not of the king only, but of all men.

Page 92. The three "feathers" of course figure the three principles, two of which are represented as moving in opposite directions, and immediately they

diverge from the right way; but the third, representing the spirit, moves in a "straight line," and has not far to go (for straight is the way that leadeth unto life). This spirit will say to us, if we listen to its voice, its still small voice,—"This commandment which I give thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. * * But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Deut. xxx. 12, 14.

The two principles are the oxen in the story of *The Flail from the Clouds*, whose horns (or pride) grew and grew, until they could not enter the door of the *stable*, or the humility proper to the life of the spirit.

These two principles, going in opposite directions, are represented as laughing in their pride at the simplicity of truth, while we see Dummling taking his *humble* seat upon the ground "with the third feather."

But the spirit is not free from sadness while the man is on the lower rounds of the ladder which reaches up into everlasting light. "Dummling sat himself down and was sad at heart;" but in his sadness and *humility* he "all on a sudden" discovers a secret door

which is to give him an entrance into spiritual life. The door was in the *ground*, that is, in the *humility* which had been pointed out by the feather. Dummling accepts this humility as the principle of his proper life, and he follows the pathway opened by that door.

Page 93. It leads him downward three steps, corresponding to the three principles of life. We see in the sacred histories, as represented in the Creed, that Christ descends before he rises in glory: and so it must be. Dummling finds another door, and obeying the injunction to "knock," as the Christian may be supposed to knock at the Gospel door [that is, the inner door, the Law being the outer door], and a sign comes to him from within, followed by an opening of the door, where a strange enough figure is presented to his eye,—"a great fat toad, and a number of little toads sitting *around* her;" and what is here intimated in this strange emblem? Nothing else but great mother nature and her ministers or principles, in a *circle* (be it observed) around her; for nature is a circle ever returning into herself: but until her principle of life

is discovered she may be figured in thousands of ways, and why not as a great fat toad, which, though ugly and venomous, "hath yet a precious jewel in her head." Dummling here asks for what he seeks, and, *page* 94, he obtains what he seeks, the most beautiful carpet (or way of life), more beautiful than any that can be woven by any (book-making) loom in the world. He is duly thankful, as why should he not be, for a piece of instruction which the world can neither give nor take away.

But the two principles—which, for convenience, we may call the reason and the affections, the sun and moon of the hermetic writers—are of a worldly character, or they look outwardly, and do not seek the way of life; and not appreciating the beauty of holiness, they mistake the coarse shawl, not accepted in humility, for the beautiful carpet.

Page 95. As a consequence, they are adjudged to have failed in the first trial; and another trial is proposed—a search after "the most beautiful ring," or, in other words, the most enduring truth, figured by a ring, which has neither beginning nor ending. The

two principles set off as before in opposite directions; but Dummling takes his seat of humility by the door which leads him down into the depths of his mother,

Page 96, where again he obtains what he seeks, and by the same process. He finds a ring "finer than any goldsmith can make"—for it is made by a "cunning worker," no other than life, the sacred builder.

Page 97. But a third trial is proposed, and this is a search after the "most beautiful wife," the crowning blessing of life, whether taken in a real or a mystical sense. But here it is taken in a mystical sense, and here too the great mother is appealed to; and it turns out that a child of her own is that beautiful bride.

The turnip, in this representation, is a figure of vegetable life, and is the image of the body, or the natural man; and the six mice harnessed to it, are no others than our friends the six swans, or the virtues of *prudence*, *temperance*, *justice*, *fortitude*, *faith*, and *hope*, while CHARITY, the greatest of all, is the presiding queen, and rides in the coach. The natural man, as we see, almost despairs, and asks, What can I do with a turnip?

Page 98. But the great mother answers, by enjoining that obedience, the departure from which we are told was the first sin. She commands, "Do what I bid you." And now, what is this command? It is as if nature said to us, Put into your soul a true genuine principle—one of my family, any one, as they sit in a "ring" (or circle) around me: and then what do we see? The toad is changed into a beautiful maiden, the turnip becomes a handsome coach, and the six little mice are fine prancing horses. The man now discovers himself to be fearfully and wonderfully made. He is filled with awe of himself, and is ready to exclaim, Not my will but thine be done—having scarcely the power, and not at all the wish to disobey for evermore. And so the kingdom is for the third time adjudged to Dummling.

Page 99. Yet, one more trial remains. We must all pass through a certain mystical ring, which hangs in the middle of the Hall. There is but one thing in the universe that can do this unharmed. If the reader needs to be told what it is, let him look forward till his eye rests upon the termination of his earthly pil-

grimage, and ask himself in what spirit he would wish to rise in another life; and when he has determined this point absolutely within himself, and has appropriated that spirit, he may feel secure that he has found the victory over the grave.

This spirit is the beautiful little lady, with such transforming power as to make a splendid coach of so humble a thing as a turnip. The classical student may here understand that this same turnip has had the honor of carrying Europa.

INTERPRETATION

OF THE STORY OF

THE FOX'S BRUSH.

[Page 102.]

We shall not have completed the task we have assumed, without furnishing some hints for understanding the most mystical and profound of the four stories in the book. The writer would prefer to be excused from an attempt to throw light upon this story of the Fox's Brush, lest its beauty might be marred by his unskilfulness; but he has already ventured too far in this field to allow of hesitation here, and he will therefore go on.

We will remark, in the first place, that it seems equally impossible to us, either to doubt the doctrine of the Trinity, or to explain it to what is called the mere reasoning powers of man. Converts are not made to this doctrine by the reasoning faculties: but

these are not the only faculties in man. He has other powers which may be discovered when they are brought into exercise. God does not exist by the permission of human reason; neither does he cease to be, in his attributes, or in the mystery of his nature, because man may say, in the presumption of his reason, that he cannot find out the Almighty, or cannot find out the Almighty in the perfection of his eternal nature. The reader may have noticed, that in the stories thus far interpreted, although there is in all of them an innocent playfulness and a childlike freedom, there is nothing to encourage the presumption of man; but everywhere, on the contrary, we see the doctrine of humility held up in characters of light, not to be denied but by a stupidity which is below all possibility of being reached by instruction.

In the story of the Fox's Brush, what are called the three principles appear under different forms; or, as in different states; or, as the man himself, in whom they act, is in a more or less perfect state, advancing from immaturity to maturity. One design of this story is to teach, that while the three principles act separately

(though in a mystical sense they never do so), they accomplish nothing towards the true end of life. It is not until they are harmonized that they act with ease and with power. For convenience we may, as heretofore, call the three principles the affections (including what is called the will), the reason, and the conscience; but it must on no account be considered that these designations are final or definite in any sense palpable to what is called the human understanding.

Premising this much, we look at the commencement of this story, and read of a king of the East; of a beautiful garden; and of a tree that bore golden apples, and hardly think it necessary to say, that these pointings are towards the paradise of Eden or the garden of God, in which, as in this story also, a certain offence is said to have been committed. But now we leave that story, as related in Genesis, and we see that one of the three principles, called the eldest (not eldest in fact, but first in manifestation, it may be, in this lower world), was "set to watch," in order to discover the mystery of the disappearance every night of a golden apple. But at about twelve o'clock, *page* 104, he fell

asleep; and the same thing happened the second night to the second son; and at last, the third son, though with some reluctance on the part of the gardener, was set to watch, and did not sleep; but as the clock struck twelve, the hour of midnight or deepest darkness, he hears a rustling noise in the air (or spirit) as a bird came and sat upon the tree. "The bird's feathers were all of pure gold" (gold being the symbol of truth); and as this bird is represented as snapping at one of the apples, we may consider that here, whatever the golden bird may turn out to be in the further development of the story, he figures the very thief who poaches upon the fruit of the royal garden. We submit this point to the deep consideration of the reflecting, without further remark.

Page 105. An arrow-shot, from the unaided conscience, fails to discover the truth, but brings an indication of it, in the form of a golden feather from the tail of the bird. Even this slight indication of the nature of what is sought, when brought before the king and council, is pronounced to be the most beautiful thing that has ever been seen, and worth more than

all the wealth of the kingdom. This, then, is the grain of mustard seed—and may lead to the treasure hid in a field, or to the pearl of great price, to purchase which a merchant sold all he had and bought that pearl. This mere glimpse of the truth performs its proper office, arousing a desire expressed in the declaration of the king—"One feather is of no use to me, I must and will have the whole bird."

The king, that is, the man, now takes the first step towards a discovery of the truth, which may be called also wisdom, and no less the way of life. It does not appear to him a difficult task, and so it has seemed to multitudes of men, who only discover the difficulty after repeated failures, many times not until driven to the very verge of desperation, and possibly not even then. But this is not the place to discuss the reasons for this, and yet we feel disposed to suggest that perhaps but for this difficulty, the prize might not have any value at all.

The eldest son is now represented as going out to seek or search for the golden bird. He reaches the "wood," which figures the world in so many of these

stories, and there he discovers, by the side of the wood, a fox sitting.

The student should well consider the character of this Fox, and should determine whether he represents something within or without the man. He may have to read the story over once, at least, and then return to it again, before being able to determine; but, at all events, he would do well to consider this point maturely, and decide as to what that may be, which for convenience may here be called the man's better judgment, which, in the character of the Fox, *page* 106, recommends humility, or a choice of the *plain* residence in preference to the "house of feasting." Does not Solomon tell us, that the house of mourning is better than the house of feasting? But reason is proud, or the will is obstinate; and here the story may be taken either way; for, in short, as in the story of Dummling, the two elder brothers turn away from the lowliness or humility with which wisdom associates, and are captivated by what is called the world—its pleasures—or its "vain pomp and glory."

Page 108. The two elder brothers, failing to dis-

cover the golden bird, the youngest is sent in search; and he, by his obedience, wins some recognition from the Fox, and obtains some assistance from him.

Page 109. The Fox invites the younger brother to take a seat upon his tail, promising that by means of it he may travel the faster; and certainly we may suppose that, until we are so happy as to reach wisdom itself, we may with great profit accept such aid as may be properly called its tail, to wit, what it has scattered throughout the world in the form of writings, which have proceeded from wise men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; for such writings are, almost without a figure, the very tail of wisdom.

After a night's rest in the plain inn, the Fox gives good advice the next day—to "go *straight* forward to the *castle* [of the mind] where will be found a whole troop of soldiers fast asleep;" that is, a troop of quiescent passions; and they must not be awakened or roused by a seeker after wisdom. He is to pass by the soldiers to a certain room, where he will find the golden bird in a *wooden* cage.

Page 111. Close by the wooden cage, is a beauti-

ful *golden* cage, and the seeker is directed not to attempt to change the bird from the plain to the rich or golden cage. We see here the unity of this advice with that given previously, not to enter the gay inn, but to rest in the plain one. But the advice in this case is not heeded. The consequence of this disobedience immediately follows; for whereas, had the seeker obeyed, he might have completed his journey at the first attempt, he is now put back,

Page 112, and has to take an intermediate step, or, as we may say, he has two steps to take instead of one; for he is sentenced to die unless he can bring a certain "golden horse." This may be considered a symbol of the divine reason; and the promise is, that if the seeker [of wisdom] can obtain possession of the *golden horse*, he shall have the *golden bird* given to him for his own.

Page 113. The Fox again gives good advice, the very same as before in another form. The young man is told of a *golden saddle*, which must not be taken in place of the plain leathern one; and he is warned that a certain "groom" will be found fast asleep and snoring.

Page 114. Everything turns out as the Fox had described. The "groom" is found fast asleep with his hand upon the golden saddle; but now the young seeker forgets the maxim that pride goeth before a fall, and he attempts to dress up a divine principle in worldly trappings, by which the conscience, the *groom* in this case, is roused, and so this attempt fails as the first did; and the seeker is condemned to die, unless he brings the "beautiful princess;" but if he does this, he is to have the horse; and then, by the previous promise, he may expect the bird also, so that all three seem to depend upon the possession of the princess. The *groom* being asleep with his hand upon the golden saddle, signifies that the conscience is in repose so long as no attempt is made to violate its treasure.

Page 115. The young man is now told that at twelve o'clock at night the princess goes to the bath; and that, as she passes, he must salute her with a kiss, and she will then allow herself to be led away.

Twelve o'clock at night is the hour of darkness, and is often taken in mystic stories as the hour of deepest sorrow and gloom, when the soul is said to enter

the bath of affliction, and if we accept this by a kiss, as a divine blessing, a beautiful mystery follows, not unlike that of the transformation of the toad, the turnip, and the mice, in the story of Dummling.

The Mystic Bath supposes the soul to be confronted with, and overpowered by great Nature in her unvaried or unvarying walk in obedience to the Spirit of God. It may be met in many ways. The intellect, in her search after knowledge, may be defeated, and thus discover the limitations put upon it by the power of God. The affections may be broken and prostrated by the loss of objects dear to them, and may realize a positive inability in themselves to reinstate peace in the soul, and this without supposing the will compromised in the cause. The conscience may also be violated, discovering to the sinner the weakness of a will unsupported by divine influences. In all cases, the *Bath* supposes a sense of the limitations upon the soul, utterly prostrating what is called the pride of man. The condition of the soul in this state is figured by the darkest hour of night; and now, when the soul *accepts* these limitations as a divine appointment, figured by a

kiss, it passes, by that fact, into a higher state. It cannot be simulated or assumed in any case, for a worldly or profane purpose. It requires, on the contrary, a total and absolute submission to the power of God, not conceived as a blind force, but as a divine intelligence; and it is not to be doubted, that many attain to it, who truly know not whence the spirit came by which they are animated, or whither it leads them.

Page 116. All turns out aright this time. The young man is obedient and obtains possession of the princess.

But he had been cautioned, that when the princess is in his possession, she must on no account be allowed to take leave of her father and mother. This seems, at first view, a very severe prohibition, but there is abundant authority for it in Scripture. We are not only warned by the fate of Lot's wife, but we read,—He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me:—as if we are told, that he who would enter into wisdom must not put into competition with his love of it, the love of father or mother, the love of son or daughter. We now see that this trial was too

great for the young man, and he again becomes a prisoner, and as this last disobedience seems to have proceeded from what may be called worldliness, he is told that he shall never have the princess unless in eight days he removes a certain hill (an obstruction to spiritual vision), called in Matthew (xvii, 20) a mountain. "Now this hill [of sin, or worldliness] was so big (says the story) that all the men in the whole world could not have taken it away: and when he had worked for seven days, and had done very little, the Fox came and said, "Lie down and go to sleep! I will work for you."

Page 117. And here we see the power of faith, which is able to remove mountains; for, "In the morning (as the story continues), when he awoke, the hill was gone." This last trial of his faith gave the young man the princess, with whom he seems at first satisfied: and so it is with many seekers after the Truth. They reach perhaps some phase of it, or some, for the time, satisfactory aspect of it, and at once jump to the conclusion that they have all they need, if they have not sounded the deepest depths of philosophy. But

the Fox soon appears, and says,—"That will not do; we will have all three,—the princess, the horse, and the bird," which seems to the young man a very great thing, and he wonders how that can be; to which the Fox answers, "If you will only listen [that is, if you will only be obedient], it can soon be done."

Page 118. "When you come to the king of the castle (says the Fox) where the golden horse is, and he asks for the beautiful princess, you must say, 'Here she is.'" This is a deep point, and can hardly be made less so by any mere discussion. Nothing is more common, it is true, than to hear the doctrine, as an every-day utterance, that God is everywhere, or that the Spirit of God is everywhere; but who, of all those who daily utter this divine dogma, have any living sense of it, or whose lives manifest any signs that this truth or this sentiment has entered their souls? In one word,—we cannot answer—*Here she is*,—until we accept her to the heart, precisely in the sense in which the Holy Mother was received at the foot of the cross by the loved disciple, to whose "home," that is, to whose *heart* she was taken. John xix, 25–27.

The spirit having come, a separation must now take place between the young man and all other things, as things; for particular things must all be merged in the universal. "Now, therefore (as we read in the Law), make confession unto the LORD GOD of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people [or common principles] of the land, and from the strange wives,"—that is, separate yourselves from all love but the love of God, or, from the love of all things except as they are loved in God; for this doctrine proposes nothing impossible.

Page 119. And now, one of the three principles being in the young man's possession, the others follow, for a reason which is very simple; that, in a mystical sense, the three are one.

But the young man is still in the wood, or the world, and has need yet of the advice of the Fox, who makes the extraordinary request, that the young man shall kill him, and cut off his head and his brush—which he is not yet prepared to do, and so needs another lesson.

Page 120. This lesson is, that he must "beware of

two things:" he must not ransom any one from the gallows (a caution against false pity), nor must he sit down by the side of a brook (or must not give himself up to ease and indulgence), while passing forward to that crown which is only reached by the cross.

Page 122. Here again, once more, we find the one sin, disobedience, and its consequences follow: for we now see that the false brothers, who had just been rescued from the gallows, attempt the destruction of their benefactor, and endeavor to appropriate all of his success to their own use. They seize the horse, the bird, and the princess, and go with them to the king as the fruit of their labor (or virtues); but the *principles* cannot be appropriated by fraud and violence: "the horse would not eat, the bird would not sing, and the princess sat by herself in her chamber, and wept bitterly."

Page 123. The Fox again helps the young man out of difficulty, and, by means of his brush, as before, for he has not yet entered into perfect freedom by perfect obedience.

Page 124. But he is now very near that perfection which is to make him a MASTER, for which purpose, the

Fox completes his character by representing him as a PIPER, the symbol of harmony; and now the horse begins to eat, the bird to sing, and the princess leaves off weeping—and the young man is married to the princess.

This is the conjugal marriage of which Swedenborg has so much to say, without perhaps making it clear to any one who did not understand it independently of the Swede's teachings; and how then can there be any hope of making it plain here?

Page 125. One more lesson seems to be needed. The Fox implores the young man with tears in his eyes to be so kind as to cut off his head and his brush; and it is not until after this is done that the Prince is revealed in the Fox,—the same prince who figures in so many of these Fairy Tales; as, in the Story of the White Dove, where he is seen in the transformed tree.

It would be an endless task to show in how many forms this teaching has come down to us from antiquity, and has been repeated from one age to another, even down to the Fairy Tale in the Story of the German Emigrants, where they appear as *two* will-o'-the-

wisps. The lesson, to avoid extremes (Scylla and Charybdis), is simple enough when put into a plain maxim, and is no other than that of Pythagoras, expressed in the brief phrase—*nothing too much;* which leaves it still an open question, as to what is just enough. In the sacred allegories they are called two thieves or two malefactors, though in one of those histories they are called simply "two others."

In this story of the Fox's Brush, no sooner does the unity appear, after the extremes are cut off, than immediately a duality arises again, it being discovered that the prince is the brother of the princess; and so he is, and these two are one again, or they are as like, the one to the other, as is God and his works; and whoso separates these, in his speculations, denies to himself the knowledge of both.

[We have concluded to add to the preceding interpretations, the Story of Faithful John, taken from the first volume of Grimm's Popular Tales, Boston, 1862,— and will add explanatory notes, as in the Story of the Red Book of Appin. Many may be surprised to find how extensively this mode of writing has prevailed in times past, and might perhaps be well employed, if at leisure, in ascertaining its history, origin, and purpose. We may be sure there were reasons for it, and it may be a serious inquiry, as to whether those reasons have or have not passed away.]

FAITHFUL JOHN.

FAITHFUL JOHN.

Once upon a time there lived an old king [*note* 1], who fell very sick, and thought he was lying upon his death-bed; so he said, "Let faithful John come to me" [2]. This faithful John was his affectionate servant, and was so called because he had been true to him all his lifetime. As soon as John came to the bedside, the king said, "My faithful John, I feel that my end approaches, and I have no other care than about my son [3], who is still so young that he cannot always guide himself aright. If you do

not promise to instruct him in everything he ought to know, and to be his guardian, I cannot close mine eyes in peace." Then John answered, "I will never leave him; I will always serve him truly, even if it cost me my life" [4]. So the old king was comforted, and said, "Now I can die in peace [5]. After my death you must show him all the chambers, halls, and vaults in the castle [6], and all the treasures which are in them; but the last room [7] in the long corridor you must not show him, for in it hangs the portrait of the daughter of the King of the Golden Palace [8]; if he sees her picture he will conceive a great love for her, and will fall down in a swoon, and

on her account undergo great perils; therefore you must keep him away." The faithful John pressed his master's hand again, in token of assent, and soon after the king laid his head upon the pillow [9] and expired.

After the old king had been laid in his grave, the faithful John related to the young king all that his father had said upon his deathbed, and declared, "All this I will certainly fulfil; I will be as true to you as I was to him, if it cost me my life." When the time of mourning was passed, John said to the young king, "It is now time for you to see your inheritance; I will show you your paternal castle" [10]. So he led the

king all over it, up stairs and down stairs, and showed him all the riches, and all the splendid chambers; only one room he did not open, containing the perilous portrait [11], which was so placed that one saw it directly the door was opened, and, moreover, it was so beautifully painted that one thought it breathed and moved; nothing in all the world could be more life-like or more beautiful. The young king remarked, however, that the faithful John always passed by one door, so he asked, "Why do you not open that one?" [12]. "There is something in it," he replied, "which will frighten you."

But the king said, "I have seen all the rest of the castle, and I will know

what is in there" [13]; and he went and tried to open the door by force. The faithful John pulled him back, and said, "I promised your father before he died that you should not see the contents of that room; it would bring great misfortunes both upon you and me."

"Oh, no," replied the young king, "if I do not go in, it will be my certain ruin; I should have no peace night nor day until I had seen it with my own eyes. Now I will not stir from the place till you unlock the door."

Then the faithful John saw that it was of no use talking, so, with a heavy heart and many sighs, he picked the key out of the great bunch [14]. When he

had opened the door he went in first, and thought he would cover up the picture, that the king should not see it; but it was of no use, for the king stepped upon tiptoes and looked over his shoulder; and as soon as he saw the portrait of the maiden, which was so beautiful and glittered with precious stones, he fell down on the ground insensible [15]. The faithful John lifted him up and carried him to his bed, and thought with great concern, "Mercy on us! the misfortune has happened; what will come of it?" and he gave the young king wine until he came to himself [16]. The first words he spoke were, "Ah, who is that beautiful picture?" "That is the daughter of

the King of the Golden Palace," was the reply.

"Then," said the king, "my love for her is so great that if all the leaves on the trees had tongues they should not gainsay it; my life is set upon the search for her. You are my faithful John; you must accompany me" [17].

The trusty servant deliberated for a long while how to set about this business, for it was very difficult to get into the presence of the king's daughter [18]. At last he bethought himself of a way, and said to the king, "Everything that she has around her is of gold—chairs, tables, dishes, bowls, and all the household utensils. Among your treasures are

five tons of gold; let one of the goldsmiths of your kingdom manufacture vessels and utensils of all kinds therefrom—all kinds of birds, and wild and wonderful beasts, such as will please her; then we will travel with these and try our luck. Then the king summoned all his goldsmiths, who worked day and night until many very beautiful things were ready. When all had been placed on board a ship, the faithful John put on merchant's clothes, and the king likewise, so that they might travel quite unknown [19]. Then they sailed over the wide sea, and sailed away until they came to the city where dwelt the daughter of the king of the golden palace [20].

The faithful John told the king to remain in the ship and wait for him [21]. "Perhaps," said he, "I shall bring the king's daughter with me; therefore take care that all is in order, and set out the golden vessels and adorn the whole ship" [22]. Thereupon John placed in a napkin some of the golden cups, stepped upon land, and went straight to the king's palace [23]. When he came into the castle yard [24], a beautiful maid [25] stood by the brook, who had two golden pails in her hand, drawing water; and when she had filled [26] them, and had turned round [27], she saw a strange man, and asked who he was. Then John answered, "I am a mer-

chant," and opening his napkin, he showed her its contents. Then she exclaimed, "Oh, what beautiful golden things!" and setting the pails down, she looked at the cups one after another, and said, "The king's daughter must see these; she is so pleased with anything made of gold, that she will buy all these." And taking him by the hand she led him in, for she was the lady's maid. When the king's daughter saw the golden cups she was much pleased, and said, "They are so finely worked that I will purchase them all." But the faithful John replied, "I am only the servant of a rich merchant [28]; what I have here is nothing in comparison to

those which my master has in his ship, than which nothing more delicate or costly has ever been worked in gold." Then the king's daughter wished to have them all brought, but he said, "It would take many days, and so great is the quantity that your palace has not halls enough in it to place them around" [29]. Then her curiosity and desire was still more excited, and at last she said, "Take me to the ship; I will go myself and look at your master's treasure" [30].

The faithful John conducted her to the ship [31] with great joy, and the king, when he beheld her, saw that her beauty was still greater than the picture [32] had represented, and

thought nothing else but that his heart would jump out of his mouth. Presently she stepped on board, and the king conducted her below; but the faithful John remained on deck by the steersman, and told him to unmoor the ship and put on all the sail he could, that it might fly as a bird in the air. Meanwhile the king showed the princess all the golden treasures—the dishes, cups, bowls, the birds, the wild and wonderful beasts. Many hours passed away while she looked at everything, and in her joy she did not remark that the ship sailed on and on [33]. As soon as she had looked at the last, and thanked the merchant, she wished to depart. But when

she came on deck she perceived that they were upon the high sea, far from the shore, and were hastening on with all sail. "Ah!" she exclaimed in affright, "I am betrayed; I am carried off and taken away in the power of a strange merchant. I would rather die!" [34].

But the king, taking her by the hand, said, "I am not a merchant, but a king, thine equal in birth [35]. It is true that I have carried thee off, but that is because of my overwhelming love for thee. Dost thou know that when I first saw the portrait of thy beauteous face that I fell down in a swoon before it?" When the king's daughter heard these words she

was reassured, and her heart was inclined towards him, so that she willingly became his bride. While they thus went on their voyage on the high sea, it happened that the faithful John, as he sat on the deck of the ship playing music, saw three crows in the air, who came flying towards them. He stopped playing and listened to what they were saying to each other, for he understood them perfectly. The first one exclaimed, "There he is, carrying home the daughter of the King of the Golden Palace." "But he is not home yet," replied the second. "But he has her," said the third; "she is sitting by him in the ship." Then the first began again and exclaimed, "What

matters that? When they go on shore, a fox-colored horse [36] will spring towards him, on which he will mount; and as soon as he is on, it will jump up with him into the air, so that he will never again see his bride." The second one said, "Is there no escape!" "Oh, yes, if another gets on quickly and takes the firearms which are in the holster out, and with them shoots the horse dead, then the young king will be saved. But who knows that? And if any one does know it, and tells him, such an one will be turned to stone from the toe to the knee." Then the second spake again, "I know still more; if the horse should be killed, the young king will not then

retain his bride; for when they come into the castle, a beautiful bridal shirt (37) will lie there upon a dish, and seem to be woven of gold and silver, but it is nothing but sulphur and pitch, and if he puts it on, it will burn him to his marrow and bones." Then the third crow asked, "Is there no escape?" "Oh, yes," answered the second; "if some one takes up the shirt with his gloves on, and throws it into the fire so that it is burnt, the young king will be saved. But what does that signify? Whoever knows it, and tells him, will be turned to stone from his knee to his heart." Then the third crow spake: "I know still more; even if the bridal shirt be consumed, still

the young king will not retain his bride. For if, after the wedding, a dance is held, while the young queen dances (38) she will suddenly turn pale, and fall down as if dead; and if some one does not raise her up, and take three drops of blood from her right breast and throw them away, she will die. But whoever knows that, and tells it, will have his whole body turned to stone, from the crown of his head to the toe of his foot."

After the crows had thus talked with one another, they flew away, and the trusty John, who had perfectly understood all they had said, was from that time very quiet and sad; for if he concealed from his master what he had

heard, misfortune would happen to him; and if he told him all, he must give up his own life. But at last he thought, "I will save my master, even if I destroy myself."

As soon as they came on shore it happened just as the crow had foretold, and an immense fox-red horse sprang up. "Capital!" said the king; "this shall carry me to my castle," and he tried to mount; but the faithful John came straight up, and, swinging himself quickly on, drew the firearms out of the holster and shot the horse dead. Then the other servants of the king, who were not on good terms with the faithful John, exclaimed, "How shameful to kill the

beautiful creature, which might have borne the king to the castle!" But the king replied, "Be silent, and let him go; he is my very faithful John—who knows the good he may have done?" Now they went into the castle, and there stood a dish in the hall, and the splendid bridal shirt lay in it, and seemed nothing else than gold and silver. The young king went up to it and wished to take it up, but the faithful John pushed him away, and, taking it up with his gloves on, bore it quickly to the fire and let it burn. The other servants thereupon began to murmur, saying, "See, now he is burning the king's bridal shirt!" But the young king replied,

"Who knows what good he has done? Let him alone—he is my faithful John."

Soon after, the wedding was celebrated, and a grand ball was given, and the bride began to dance. So the faithful John paid great attention, and watched her countenance; all at once she grew pale, and fell as if dead to the ground. Then he sprang up hastily, raised her up and bore her to a chamber, where he laid her down, kneeled beside her, and, drawing the three drops of blood out of her right breast, threw them away. As soon as she breathed again, she raised herself up; but the young king had witnessed everything, and not knowing why the faithful John

had done this, was very angry, and called out, "Throw him into prison!" The next morning the trusty John was brought up for trial, and led to the gallows; and as he stood upon them, and was about to be executed, he said, "Every one condemned to die may once before his death speak; shall I also have that privilege?" "Yes," answered the king, "it shall be granted to you." Then the faithful John replied, "I have been unrighteously judged, and have always been true to you;" and he narrated the conversation of the crows which he heard at sea; and how, in order to save his master, he was obliged to do all he had done. Then the king cried out,

"Oh, my most trusty John, pardon, pardon; lead him away!" But the trusty John had fallen down at the last word and was turned into stone (39).

At this event both the king and the queen were in great grief, and the king asked, "Ah, how wickedly have I rewarded his great fidelity!" and he had the stone statue raised up and placed in his sleeping chamber, near his bed; and as often as he looked at it he wept and said, "Ah, could I bring you back to life again, my faithful John!" (40).

After some time had passed, the queen bore twins, two little sons, who were her great joy. Once, when the queen was in church, and the two chil-

dren at home playing by their father's side, he looked up at the stone statue full of sorrow, and exclaimed with a sigh, "Ah, could I restore you to life, my faithful John!" (41.) At these words the stone began to speak, saying, "Yes, you can make me alive again, if you will bestow on me that which is dearest to you." The king replied, "All that I have in the world I will give up for you." The stone spake again: "If you, with your own hand, cut off the heads of both your children and sprinkle me with their blood, I shall be brought to life again" [42]. The king was terrified when he heard that he must himself kill his two dear chil-

dren; but he remembered his servant's great fidelity, and how the faithful John had died for him, and drawing his sword he cut off the heads of both his children with his own hand. And as soon as he had sprinkled the stone with the blood, the life came back to it, and the trusty John stood again alive and well before him, and said, "Your faith shall not go unrewarded;" and taking the heads of the two children, he set them on again, and anointed their wounds with their blood, and thereupon they healed again in a moment, and the children sprang away and played as if nothing had happened.

Now the king was full of happiness,

and as soon as he saw the queen coming he hid the faithful John and both the children in a great cupboard. As soon as she came in he said to her, "Have you prayed in the church?" "Yes," she answered; "but I thought continually of the faithful John, who has come to such misfortune through us." Then he replied, "My dear wife, we can restore his life again to him, but it will cost us both our little sons, whom we must sacrifice." The queen became pale and was terrified at heart, but she said, "We are guilty of his life on account of his great fidelity." Then he was very glad that she thought as he did, and going up to the cupboard he unlocked

it, brought out the children and the faithful John, saying, "God be praised! he is saved, and we have still our little sons;" and then he told her all that had happened. Afterward they lived happily together to the end of their days.

INTERPRETATION

OF THE STORY OF

FAITHFUL JOHN.

Before reading the following interpretation of the story of Faithful John, the reader is supposed to have read the story itself, and to have it at hand for reference.

In order to understand this story it is necessary, in the first place, to determine who or what is represented by the old King; but, for this purpose, there are very few elements, apart from the general current of the story and an acquaintance with the style of mystical writing in use when such stories were written.

There are three possible suppositions with respect to the old King, to either one of which a common interpretation will apply. We may suppose the old King to be simply an aged MAN, whose son we may understand to be

his Soul; but, as the Soul of every individual man is an image of that of the race, the Son may be taken to be the Soul of the race, and the reader will then readily see who the old King must be. In this case, whilst we may easily see in what sense the evangelist John is said to have been "true to him all his life," it will be difficult for most readers, unacquainted with the mystical style of writing, to understand in what sense the King can be said to grow old, become sick, and finally die.

To explain this point as far as we think it expedient, we must remark that in early life the dominant power, or King, over the Soul is the imagination; but as we advance in years, this power may be said to grow "less and less," and, finally, yielding to the presence or the pressure of reality, it may be said to die.

Yet this must not be asserted of the imagination itself, but only of the objects of the imagination, which fade before reason and reality, when true *images* take the place of false ones—or, in one word, when the true God takes the place of the imaginary God.

The reader may do well to consider that most of us, before obtaining what may be called the true knowl-

edge of a thing (anything, whether spiritual or material), are apt to form an image (or an imaginary notion) of the thing; but when we can be said to know the thing, the image ceases to delude us, and may be said to die, though sometimes the image is understood to be false before the coming of true knowledge. If, now, the Son of the old King be taken to signify Israel, or the Soul of the human race, as just intimated, the deeper meaning of this story may rise before the student, who may then understand, as we have just said, who the old King represents, to whom John is said to have been "true all his life."

There is still another supposition possible with respect to the meaning of the story, which would make the point of the story turn on the substitution of the Gospel for the Law.

On this supposition the letter of the Law would be the old King, about to give place to its own Spirit, as the Gospel—a transition through which any man in any age (subsequent to the advent of Christ) might pass, this transition being represented in his feelings, opinions, and sentiments.

In this case the Son would represent the Spirit, and may be supposed to be the "heir" referred to by St. Paul, in the fourth chapter of Galatians, said to be under "tutors and governors,"—and on this supposition, we may understand, in a poetic sense, how John is said to have been called to the bedside of the old King, as one of the "tutors" of the Son, and one who had always been true to the King, that is, true and faithful in his obedience to the Law, by which he had attained its Spirit, and had received power to write the Gospel of eternal life.

But we shall assume the first of the above suppositions—that the old King represents a MAN, whose "care" for his Son signifies his *concern* for his Soul,—the interpretation in the main answering to all three of the suppositions. We will now enter upon the interpretation.

Note 1. Once upon a time (the Story begins) there lived an old King; and the old King we will consider an old or aged MAN; for, in this story, as in that of the Red Book of Appin, MAN is the subject of the Story.

2. The aged or elderly man, we are told, fell very sick, and thought he was lying on his death bed. In this condition he said, "Let faithful John come to me."

The faithful John, here referred to, is John the Evangelist, the loved disciple of the Lord, who now lives in the faithful history of his Master; and the declaration, "Let faithful John come to me," imports that the aged man, feeling the infirmities of declining years, or that want of spiritual rest so common to those who are called men of the world, has turned his attention to the Gospel, or to the writings of John in particular, and being convinced of the fidelity or faithfulness of John, he determines to yield himself to the influence or the teachings of the Gospel, and describes this purpose under the figure of calling faithful John to his bedside.

We must now consider the Gospel (or the whole of the writings of John) as personified; and the power of the Gospel or of its truth is what John is about to be represented as doing and saying, the Gospel being considered as twofold, letter and spirit, just as the Law is

twofold, letter and spirit; for, as in the Law also, it is the spirit, or the truth, that "doeth the works."

3. The "care" of the old King about his son, signifies the care of the aged man about his SOUL, whose age is not measured by the years of the man, and hence he is said to be "so young that he cannot always guide himself aright." For the instruction and guidance of the soul, the faithful John is called, and he is represented as giving a promise to the old King to be faithful to his son,

4. "even if it should cost him his life." This is the perpetual office of the Gospel, for it is a faithful Teacher "from generation to generation;" and yet it mystically dies as often as it communicates its spirit or life to a disciple or follower.

This mystical death may as well be referred to at once, because it will be exhibited in the Story. It signifies that, when a disciple truly receives the spirit of the Gospel, the letter is no longer needed; that is, it is not needed by the disciple so receiving the truth: but then, again, when a disciple thus receives the truth, and perceives its immortality, he recognizes the per-

petual life of the Gospel itself, which, then, is said to revive and live again, and then it lives forever; but its life is now seen to be in the spirit, and is known not to be dependent upon the letter.

5. The language of the old King,—"I can now die in peace," signifies that the aged man is willing to die when, in a profound faith in faithful John, he commits his soul to the guidance of the Gospel. He is dramatically represented as throwing himself entirely into the arms of John, that is, the Gospel, the total surrender of his personal will being figuratively called a death; and, in some sort, it is a death, called by St. Paul the death of the old man.

6. The injunction of the old King to John, to show his Son all of the chambers and riches of the "castle," expresses his faith in the power of the Gospel to disclose to a faithful soul its own spiritual wonders and riches; but the caution, not to show him

7. "the last room in the long corridor," intimates that the nature of death is to be concealed from him; because God himself has drawn a veil over it while man is in the body: but as the passage to life eternal is

through the denial, or the negation, that is, the death of the finite (the natural man), it is said, that in that last room is placed

8. *the portrait of the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace*,—the overpowering effect of a sight of which is described as a swoon.

The aged man must now be seen in his Son, that is, in his Soul, and we are to follow the experiences of the soul under the teaching and guidance of the Gospel, as represented in faithful John, who is

9. the *pillow*, on which the old King reposes, in the calmness of death,—a figure of the highest possible faith.

We do not propose to be particularly minute in following out the sense of this very mystical and extraordinary story; but we will rapidly indicate such leading points as may be useful to students who may not be familiar with this class of writings, and such as may enable them to determine its purpose and general sense.

10. The man being supposed to be in a suitable state to receive the instruction of the Gospel, faithful John is represented as saying to the Son, that is, to the

Soul, or, rather, as the Mystics understand it, he speaks *in the Soul*, "It is now time for you to see your inheritance; I will show you your paternal castle." This is a mystical expression of the office or purpose of the Gospel, to wit, to disclose or make known to the soul its descent from a higher life, the "paternal castle," to which it returns in Christ. In other words, the Gospel teaches that way of life to the wandering soul, by which it returns to its Father,—the paternal castle. This is mystically shown in the Gospel under figures and parables, which, as the "flesh" (or letter), "profiteth nothing;" and it is represented in the Story, in a figure also, as if John led the King all over the castle, "up stairs and down stairs" (through heaven and earth), and showed him all the (spiritual) riches, and all the splendid chambers;—to wit, the new Jerusalem as described in the Revelation; for the new Jerusalem is the "paternal mansion" of the soul,—when understood in the spirit, which "giveth life."

But,—one room is not opened, said to contain the "perilous portrait," to wit, Life in Death, which is described as being so placed that it is seen directly as

the door is opened—the passage from death to life being instantaneous.

11. The portrait of the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace, is said to be so beautifully painted, that one thought it "breathed and moved;" nothing in all the world ('tis said) "could be more life-like or beautiful." This is a mystical allusion to the beauty of the twentieth chapter of John's Gospel, as it is seen in the spirit; for, to the spirit, that representation is a portrait of eternal life; or, it is a picture of a true spiritual faith, called the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace (of God). When this picture is first seen by the uninstructed soul, it is seen as a history, and is not recognized as a life; and, therefore, the man is represented as asking,

12. "Why do you not open that" (last room)? Because, says faithful John, there is something in it which will frighten you. This is supposed to be said to the man before he understands the true signification of death, to whom, therefore, death is something frightful.

13. But the intense desire to know something

about death is expressed in the declaration, "I will know what is in there," that is, in that last chamber of the long corridor; adding, a moment after, "I will not stir from the place till you [John] unlock the door."

14. The Key to that door is Christ, the eternal life; and as the Gospel represents Christ as speaking of or to the Jews, as if they searched the Scriptures for eternal life, so John is now represented as taking the *Key* from "the great bunch," to wit, from the books of the Bible, in order to open the door. In other words, John is here represented as taking from the Scriptures the Spirit of Christ, with which or in which he wrote the Gospel for the purpose of explaining the mystery of *life in death*. But because of the sacredness of this mystery, John is represented as preceding the disciple, and as putting a "cover" over the picture, in order that the man should not see it; that is, the picture is presented in the Gospel in figurative and symbolical language, called a "cover" over the picture, in order that the so-called natural man should not be injured by being led to imagine himself in pos-

session of that truth which is possible only to the spiritual man. Hence this picture seems, to the natural man, to be a history of something in the past; but to the spiritual man it is a portrait of eternal life, and is said to be so beautifully represented as to have the appearance of life.

15. But now, the disciple is represented as rising (in the spirit) on "tiptoes," and as "looking over the shoulder of John;" that is, he looks through the Gospel, which is called looking over the shoulder of John; and he recognizes the portrait, or catches a glimpse of its truth, the overpowering effect of which is represented by the language, that "he fell down on the ground insensible." So was it with St. Paul when he first had a realizing sense of the eternal life of the spirit.

16. But now we see represented the truth of the declaration, "I kill and I make alive;" for, as it was a spiritual sight of the Life or Spirit, which struck the disciple down, we see that faithful John, that is, the Gospel, by means of its spirit, called *wine*, restores the disciple to himself; and his first inquiry, on waking to

consciousness is, "Ah! who is that beautiful picture," and his inner life answers, "That is the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace."

17. And now, to seek out that eternal life the disciple dedicates himself; and as he had caught a glimpse of it from the Gospel, he is represented as calling upon faithful John, that is, upon the Gospel, to be his companion in the search.

18. We come next to the great difficulty of attaining to that eternal life, which is called the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace, and faithful John is represented as deliberating a long while upon the best mode of coming into her presence. At length we find his doctrine of innocence and truth, as he figuratively represents it by the dove and the lamb, this doctrine being here figured in the language, "Everything that she has around her is of gold," &c.; that is, within the sphere of the King's daughter, nothing is seen or known but virgin truth, figured by gold. The seeker is told, in one word, to fill his soul with truth; and this law is absolute. Everything false must be expelled from the heart that would know the truth or

come into its presence. It is impossible to overstate the importance of this very simple principle.

19. The soul, being duly prepared for the search after truth, is represented as a *ship* in which certain golden ornaments are placed; and faithful John and the disciple are described as adopting a disguise, and sailing over the wide sea (of the world) to the city where dwells the King's daughter: and this means that the Gospel is itself a figurative and symbolical, or *disguised* representation of the passage of the soul to the Holy City of God. It is a symbolical history of the KEY, found in the "bunch" of the books of the Old Testament, in the person of CHRIST, who is that KEY, as he leads the loved disciple to the foot of the cross, where he receives the virgin mother to his heart; and the virgin mother is herself the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace. She is the virgin mother of that Son of God, who is described in so many symbolical representations, as making her his bride, the Bride of the Lamb.

20. The spiritual treasures, which, in Exodus [xxx. 34–36], are called spices and frankincense, being in the

ship, that is, in the man, the ship is figured as sailing over the "wide sea" (of life), until she is said to come to the city where dwelt the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace. This city is truly before all men, but is not known to them, or to but few of them, for they are generally interested in almost everything else, in preference to engaging in that search after the Princess, in which we see the soul employed in this story of faithful John.

21. The King, that is, the soul, is told by John to remain in the ship: which signifies that, in this search after truth, the man does not go out of himself, or out of his true nature.

22. He remains in himself; but is told by his faithful guide, who must be considered the Gospel personified, to take care that "all is in order," and he must "set out the golden vessels," and must "adorn the whole ship;" that is, the whole man.

But the man and John are, in a mystical sense, one and the same, the spiritual nature of John being truly in the soul, although apparently, at first, without, in the Gospel, that is, in the letter. It is this spiritual

nature in the soul which is, in truth, leading the soul to the Gospel, although it is here represented as if the Gospel, in the person of John, was leading the soul. This is because, until the life of the Gospel is recognized, it seems to be without the soul, as if in the letter of the Gospel; but the Gospel would not be even thus far recognized but for the invisible presence in the soul of its divine spirit. It is this secret presence of the spirit in the soul, moving it both to and by the Gospel, which is called, in the Gospel itself, being *drawn* by the Father, in the language, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him;" or, again, in the same sixth chapter, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." This secret influence is invoked in the Canticles, "*Draw me, we will run after thee; the King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.* This language is addressed to the *object*, which is now represented as *leading* the soul to the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace.

23. But before the perfect vision, and while yet the

seeker sees as through a glass darkly, faithful John is represented as placing in a *napkin*, that is, in the *letter*, some of the golden cups (or truths), and as going with them "straight to the King's palace:" straight—for the way of access to the palace is straight, and in no sense crooked,—according to the command in Isaiah (xl. 3), Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our GOD:—that is, make your walk straight, or right and just, when you seek the presence of the Daughter of the King of the Golden Palace. This step, made by the soul, is said to be a step "upon land," to indicate that a soul, thus consciously moving in the truth, is sustained and supported by the power of God, in its divine yearnings after the spirit.

24. This step "upon land," is said to lead first to the "castle yard," that is, into the outer court, of the King's palace; for all men must pass through nature to grace, and in this picture, nature is the castle yard; and this, in the next line, is personified as

25. "a beautiful maid, standing by a brook, with two golden pails in her hand"—the brook being an

image of the spirit, the two golden pails being figurative language for the body and soul while the man is yet in the state of nature, before passing into the true light. The maid, in the outer court, is represented

26. as filling the two golden pails, first, before she sees signs of a higher life; but having filled them,

27. she *turns around*; for, although man must pass through nature to grace, he does not reach the so-called state of grace, so long as he looks only to nature itself, or, so long as he continues to draw *water* with the two golden buckets; but these *two*, failing to reach the true water of life, the maid—now representing the natural man—is described as turning around. But this should not be understood in a mere material sense. Neither is the use of the word spirit to be taken in any wild or impossible sense. Any change in a mode of thinking or feeling may be called a *turning*, in the sense here intended. Let us remain in the ship, according to the meaning of faithful John, and we may see, both materially and spiritually, all that we are designed to see while in this tabernacle of the body.

With these, possibly unnecessary cautions, let us return to the course of the story.

The maid turns around, and looking in the opposite direction, is said to see a "strange man," and upon asking who he is, is answered, *a merchant*,—and this is now the Gospel, represented as a man, having a "napkin" containing some of the golden vessels, or truths of the spirit.

These golden vessels or spiritual truths now greatly excite the inner life, and become the channel or medium of an intercommunication between the man and the King's daughter, by means of the maid, who represents herself as only the lady's maid, thus mystically telling us that nature is but the servant of the spirit. Nevertheless, it is by the aid of this servant that man is led, "by the hand," as we see it represented in this story, into the presence of the King's daughter, but it must be kept in mind that this takes place only upon certain conditions.

And now we see faithful John, in answer to a question by the princess, announcing himself as but

28. "the servant of a rich merchant," declaring

that what he has in the napkin (the letter or outer life), is nothing in comparison to those (golden treasures) which are in the ship, "than which nothing more delicate or costly has ever been worked in gold:" and when the King's daughter wishes them all brought to her, she is answered, by faithful John—

29. "it would take many days, and so great is the quantity that your palace has not halls enough in it to place them around." This is the figure of a soul which, having seen the golden beauties (or truths) in the letter of the Gospel, is incited to a desire for all truth, and receives for an answer, as it were, the very language of the Gospel, "And there are also many other things, which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." John xxi. 25.

30. And now the King's daughter is represented as exclaiming, "Take me to the ship; I will go myself and look at your master's treasure."

It is impossible for representations like these not to lose some of their beauty, when reduced to mere didac-

tic statements; but this loss is not felt, so long as the spiritual sense of the representation is not realized, and, therefore, the attempt thus to exhibit them may be excused, it being for the purpose of awakening attention to the import of the story, in order that its real beauties may be apprehended.

In this declaration, "Take me to the ship," we must recognize a soul, which, having seen some of the beauties of a spiritual life, through the "napkin" (or letter of the Gospel), determines to pass wholly to a higher life, in order the more completely to realize its spiritual treasures.

31. Faithful John now conducts the King's daughter to the ship; or, which is the same thing, he brings a sense of the higher life into the presence of the soul, the Gospel being the medium of communication, by means of the similitude of its spiritual beauties to those in the ship, that is, in the soul, these two being, indeed, of one and the same nature; in which operation the Gospel performs the part of a Mediator (the office of Christ), pointing to that eternal life, of which the Gospel is said to contain the portrait: for the Gospel, as

a letter, may be compared, in its office, to the Baptist, who speaks of one coming after him whose shoe's latchet he, as the letter of the Old Testament, is not worthy to unloose.

32. And now the soul begins to see the transcendent splendors of a divine life, far beyond the beauty of the portrait which had been first seen, whilst on "tiptoe" looking over the "shoulder of John:" and it is just here, we will take leave to say, that the soul is in a right position for appreciating much of the language of the divine Song of songs, the Canticles, in which the Spirit of Life is sometimes addressed in the masculine and sometimes in the feminine sense, for the *Daughter* of the King of the Golden Palace is the *Son* of God.

This is what is signified in the verse from Genesis, transferred to the Gospel of Matthew, ch. xix. 4: "Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female?"—the mystical comment being, "wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh."

And thus are they referred to in the Canticles:

"*Let* HIM *kiss me with the kisses of* HIS *mouth: for thy love is better than wine.*"

"*Behold thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair.*" "*Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.*"

"*How fair is my* SISTER, *my spouse!*" "*I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my* SISTER, *my love, my undefiled.*"

"*I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn* HIMSELF, *and was gone.*"

"*My dove, my undefiled is but one;* SHE *is the only one of* HER *mother,* SHE *is the choice one of her that bare her.*"

"*I am my beloved's, and* HIS *desire is towards me. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.*"

"*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death.*"

"*Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*"

In reading this beautiful rhapsody of an inspired

soul, we feel as if we would have the divine words uttered in the hearing of all men: To the pure all things are pure.

33. We now see the ship, the soul, still under the guidance of faithful John, who is beautifully described as standing with the "Steersman" (the conscience), making music, and as sailing "on and on" towards land, or its proper resting place, bearing a precious burden, received from the letter; but when it first discovers itself on the sea (of life) separated, as it were, from the letter, which had been accepted as its only guide, a sense of loneliness passes over the soul, as if it had been ravished from its proper home, or as if its only hope had been taken from it, and the soul exclaims:

34. "I am betrayed—and am in the hands of a strange merchant."

35. But now the soul, being elevated by the presence of the spirit, is inspired with a divine sense of its native worth, and declares, "I am not a merchant, but a king, thine equal in birth. It is true that I have carried thee off, but that is because of my overwhelming love for thee." These words of *assimilation* bring the two into

harmony, and the King's daughter becomes the Bride of the soul.

But just here, when the divine inheritance seems on the point of attainment, the soul is exposed to its greatest dangers, which we will briefly indicate, and will hasten to a close, having already expanded our remarks far beyond what was originally intended.

36. The first great danger to man, in the supposed attainment of spiritual truth, is his exposure to spiritual pride. This, in the story of faithful John, is figured by the fox-colored horse, which meets him at the very moment when he imagines himself safely "on shore." But the Gospel is prepared for this, and by its lessons of humility teaches the spirit to put the horse to death, and this must be done with a pistol drawn from his own holsters; for every man must be, for himself, the executioner of his own pride.

37. The second great danger is this, to wit: a delusive imagination, that a robe of righteousness, called in the story, "a beautiful bridal shirt," can be obtained at second-hand (even from the letter of the Gospel itself) by which the soul is in danger of supposing itself excused

from being instrumental in clothing itself with its proper "wedding garments," in which to appear at the marriage of the son.

But here, likewise, the Gospel has ample instruction for those who will receive it, by which they may be protected from this very common misunderstanding. The robe, thus received at second-hand, may have all the appearance of having been "woven of gold and silver:" but the Gospel, rightly understood, will tell any one, that, if not woven by the soul itself, it is but "sulphur and pitch," and will burn whoever attempts to wear it "to his marrow and bones:" and thus we see, in the story, that faithful John throws the fictitious robe into the fire, and it is burnt.

38. The third great danger is this: that the soul may imagine it has acquired the power of walking on the unstable waters of the world, without the aid of the spirit, because it has drawn from the letter, it may be, some portion of its spiritual sense. The fallacy of this is represented by the attempt of the bride to engage in the dance, the symbol of action in life, in which attempt

she suddenly finds her power fail her, and, turning pale, she falls down as if dead.

But here also, the Gospel, in the person of faithful John, is at hand, and applies the proper remedy by casting away three drops of blood from the right breast of the bride; a mysterious symbol, indicating a casting away of the *three* principles, by which means the ONE is restored to life and action.

39. But in this great lesson, faithful John has exhausted his visible teaching, and by denying a *plurality* has denied himself; and is thus represented as being turned into stone.

40. But this lesson seems too great for the man: for, however the spirit may be affected, at first, by a sense of its freedom from the bondage of the letter, it soon comes to feel an awful sense of solitude in the midst of the universe, and may then yearn for a return to its early child-like faith in the letter. In this state we hear the soul exclaim, in its solitude, "Ah, could I bring you to life again, my faithful John:" which indicates that the man is not yet in unity. This is immediately shown by the representation, that the bride, and

this is the man's heart, gives birth to twins, the ever-recurring *two* in so many mystic stories.

41. But the true unity is a harmony, and does not leave the man alone. Thus we see that, even here, the longing of the soul for the life of faithful John, which signifies in truth the divine life, is expressed in the repeated exclamation, "Ah! could I restore you to life, my faithful John:" and this longing of the soul evokes from the depths of the spirit, the response, "You can make me alive again, if you will bestow on me that which is dearest to you:" upon which the King replies, "All that I have in the world I will give up for you."

42. And now the stone speaks again: "If you, with your own hand [for it can be done by no other], cut off the heads of both your children and sprinkle me with their blood, I shall be brought to life again."

Here we see the great trial of faith imposed upon the ancient patriarch, who was found equal to the task, though excused from the performance of it: and in this story of faithful John, we see how this great act of self-denial which carries the spirit into unity, contains in itself not only its own living principle, but the life of

what is given for it; for not only is faithful John restored, but through him the two sons are brought to life "as if nothing had happened;" and, last of all, the queen, the heart, acquiescing in the providence of God, under the sense of doing a great act of justice, receives from universal nature, "the great cupboard," the objects of its affection, which, in truth, have never been really lost; and the soul exclaims, "God be praised! he is saved, and we have still our little sons."

And now,—what may these two sons represent, but reason and faith; which, having been disjoined in a natural life, are brought together again through the Gospel, and enjoy henceforth a blessed unity? It is of this union that we read in Matthew, xix. 6: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." But it is admitted, in the 11th verse, following, that, All men cannot receive [or understand] this saying, save they to whom it is given.

Those who may be disposed to deny the meaning here imputed to this story of Faithful John, are requested to observe the gravity with which the story is

told, and consider whether any other interpretation can with plausibility be given to it. That the story is not a mere vagary of the imagination seems very plain, its construction being too visibly regular to admit of such a supposition. If the reader therefore is not satisfied with the interpretation here proposed, let him please his fancy or his heart with a more appropriate one.

It may assist an unpracticed student of Fairy Tales —for, though seemingly addressed to children, many of them are things to be studied—to observe that many of the transformations, of which they treat, are simply personified changes in the state of man as he passes through life,—his feelings, for example, as they were while acting, and the memory of them when reflection brings the same feelings before him; or, they may represent his changed opinions on important subjects as experience or study furnishes grounds for such changes, &c. From this point of view the *thoughts* and *feelings* of man constitute a vast family of *birds*, and other *animals*, in the "midst" of which a mysterious ONE may be discovered, which maintains a certain uniformity and serenity throughout all

changes, itself unchanged. We are told that but one thing is needful, and surely this one thing must be the pearl of great price.

[In addition to the preceding stories and interpretations, we have decided to append one story more, from Taylor's translation of the Fairy Ring, entitled, The Goosegirl at the Well; and if the reader is as much pleased with it as the editor is, he will be very thankful for having it thrown in his way. We will make no interpretation of this beautiful story beyond a few footnotes, though strongly tempted to do so, preferring to leave it for the exercise of the reader's sense of truth, or his imagination, if he prefers to put it on this ground.]

THE

GOOSEGIRL AT THE WELL.

THE GOOSEGIRL AT THE WELL.

There was once an old Woman, who lived with her flock of geese on a lonely heath amongst high hills,* and had there a little hut. The heath was surrounded by a large wood, and every morning the old woman took her crutch and hobbled into the wood. And there she presently fell to work, as busy as a bee; you would never have thought an old woman of her age† could have been so brisk.

* These "high hills" are perpetually around us all.

† Some six thousand years or so.

She gathered grass for her geese, plucked the wild fruit from the trees, as far as she could reach, and carried it all home upon her back. When anyone chanced to meet her, she greeted him kindly: "Good morning, friend,—fine weather today! Ah, I see you wonder at my dragging along this bundle of grass, but everyone has his burden to bear." The people, however, shunned her, and would go a long way about to avoid meeting her; and when a father, walking with his children, passed her, he would whisper in their ear: "Take care of the old woman, —she is a witch!"

One morning a handsome young

man * was rambling through the wood. The sun shone bright, the birds were singing, a cool breeze stirred among the leaves, and his heart was light and merry.† He wandered a long while, but met no one; when at length, on a sudden, he saw the old woman, down on her knees, busy cutting grass with a sickle.‡ She had already stowed a large heap in her sack, and by her side stood two baskets full of apples and pears. "Good morning, dame!" said the young man; "prithee how can you carry such a

* Life.

† Light and merry—as usual in early life.

‡ The old woman does a good deal of her cutting with a *scythe*, but 'tis said that, by kissing it, the edge may be completely turned!

load?" "Ah, my young master," said she, "need has no choice, and I must carry it as well as I am able. Rich folks' children may be idle, but you know what the proverb says to the poor man,—

'If round you look,
Your back has a crook.'

But will you help me? You have a straight back and young legs; this bundle is a trifle to you; and my cottage is not far off, on a heath over yonder hill: you might skip there presently." The youth took pity on the old woman. "My father indeed is no peasant, but a rich lord," said he; "however, to let you see that others beside poor folks can

carry loads, I will take your bundle."* "Well," answered the old woman, "if you will, I shall be very glad. We have an hour's walk to be sure, but what's that to you? Here, you must take the apples and pears † as well."

When the young man heard her talk of an hour's walk, he began to think more seriously of the matter; however, the old woman would not let him off; she strapped the sack upon his back, and hung the two baskets on his arms. "There, there!" said she, "it is all easy

* The young man accepts the burden imposed by nature.

† The perpetual *two* principles within which the walk of life is bounded, "one on either side," life being in the midst between the two.

enough, you see." "Not at all so easy, dame," said the youth, and he made a wry face: "the bundle is as heavy as if it were full of stones, and the apples and pears must surely be made of lead: I can scarcely breathe." He had a great mind to throw off the burden, but the old woman would not let him. "Well, to be sure, only look there!" said she jeeringly; "a stout young fellow that cannot carry a load which an old woman like me has often and often dragged along! But this is the way with such folks; plenty of fine words, indeed,—only try them in earnest, and they are off in a moment. Well, why do you stand idling there?" she went on;

"come, stir your legs briskly! nobody will take off your bundle."

As long as he walked on level* ground, it was all very well; but when they came to the hill, and had to toil up the steep path, and the stones rolled down under his feet as if they were alive, then his strength began to fail. "Good mother," said he, "I really cannot go any farther; do let us rest a little." "Wait awhile!" answered the old woman; "when we have come to our journey's end you may rest as much as you will, but now you must jog onwards.

* We move very cheerfully under the burden of nature so long as we are not tried: but life has its "hills."

Who knows what good may come of it?" "Old dame, you are impudent," said the youth, and he tried to throw off the sack, turning and twisting himself one way and another, but all in vain; it stuck as fast as if it had grown to his back.* Thereupon the old woman laughed heartily, and danced round her crutch with very glee. "Don't be in a passion, good sir," said she; "you are as red as a turkey cock. Carry your bundle patiently, and when we get home I will reward you well." The poor fellow could not help himself, so he tried to put a good face on the matter, and toiled on patiently behind the old woman. At

* It *had* grown there.

every step she seemed to grow more nimble, and his burden to grow heavier. All at once she gave a leap, jumped on to the sack, and seated herself upon it; and although she was as thin as a lath, yet she seemed heavier than the stoutest country lass. The young man's knees trembled under him, but whenever he stopped, the old woman whipped his legs with a bunch of nettles.* And thus he went on, sighing and groaning at every step, until they came to the top of the hill; at length they reached the old woman's hut, just as he was ready to drop with fatigue.

* Nature will not allow us to stop in the middle of our journey of life; nor to throw aside its burden.

As soon as the geese saw the old woman, they stretched out their necks, flapped their wings, and ran to meet her, crying out, "Wulle! wulle!" Behind the flock came an old wench, stout and lusty, but as ugly as night. "Good mother," said she, "what has happened to make you stay out so late?" "Be easy, daughter," answered the old woman, "no harm has befallen me: on the contrary, my young master here has carried my load for me; but not content with that, when I was tired he took me up too upon his back.* And all the way we have been so merry, joking and

*If we carry nature first, patiently, she carries us afterwards.

laughing, that the distance really seemed nothing at all."

At length the old woman slid down, unstrapped the bundle from the young man's back, and took the baskets from his arms; and having done so, she said, with a kind smile, "Now sit you down on the bench before the door, and rest awhile; you have fairly earned your reward."* Then she said to the goosegirl, "Go into the house, daughter; it is not becoming for you to be alone with the young man,—we must not pour oil upon the fire; who knows but he might fall

* "Earned," that is, by patient service, after he had reached the top of the hill: for nature rewards no one who does not first serve her.

in love with you?" The young prince scarcely knew whether to laugh or cry. "Such a beauty!" thought he; "my heart is safe enough."

Meanwhile the old woman fondled her geese and patted them on the head, as if they were her children, and then went with her daughter into the house. The youth stretched himself on the bench under a wild apple tree. The air was soft and mild: a green meadow spread out all around, covered with cowslips, wild thyme, and a thousand other flowers; a clear brook purled along through the grass, and the sun glanced brightly on its waters. "Oh, how de-

licious!"* said he; "but I am too tired to keep my eyes open, and will sleep a little. I only hope no gust of wind will come and carry off my legs from my body, for they are as brittle as tinder."

After he had slept a little while, the old woman came and shook him until he awoke. "Up, up!" said she, "you cannot stay here any longer. 'Tis true I have given you trouble enough, but it has not cost you your life, and now you shall have your reward: money and goods you do not want, therefore here is something else for you." So saying she put into his hand a little casket, which

* Nature is thus delicious to one who feels that he has borne his part in life faithfully.

was made of a single emerald.* "Take care of it," she added, "and it will bring you good luck." The prince jumped up, and felt quite fresh and strong again; he thanked the old woman for her gift, and set out on his way, without once looking back at her fair daughter; but for some time he still heard the lusty cackling of the geese in the distance.†

The prince wandered about for three days, till at length he came to a great city; and as no one knew him, he was brought to the king's palace, where the king and the queen were sitting upon

*The pearl of great price, the key to unnumbered mysteries.

† "In the distance"—as we leave them behind us.

the throne. The prince dropped on one knee, took the emerald casket out of his pocket and laid it at the feet of the queen. Then she bade him stand up, and reach her the casket: but hardly had she opened the lid and peeped into it, when she fell like one dead upon the floor.* The prince was instantly seized by the king's servants, who were going to carry him off to prison, when the queen opened her eyes and ordered him to be set free, and told all the people to leave the room, as she wished to speak with the prince in private.

* In like manner the young King, in Faithful John, swoons, when he first obtains a glimpse of the portrait of the daughter of the King of the Golden Palace.

As soon as they were alone, the queen fell a-weeping bitterly, and said, "Alas! what pleasure can I have in all the rank and splendor which surround me! Every morning I awake with care and sorrow. I had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so fair that the whole world looked on her as a marvel of beauty.* She was as white as snow, as red as an apple blossom, and her hair shone like the sunbeams. When she wept, pearls and precious stones fell from her eyes, instead of tears. She was fifteen years old, when the king one day called the three sisters before his throne. Oh you

* Let the reader consult the episode of Cupid and Psyche, in the story of the Golden Ass, by Apuleius.

should have seen how all the people opened their eyes when the youngest entered—it was just as if the sun came forth. The king said, 'My daughters, I know not when my last hour may come, and I will to-day settle what each of you shall have after my death. You all love me, I know; but she who loves me most shall have the best share.'

"Then each daughter declared that she loved him the most; but the king said, 'Cannot you express how dear I am to you? then I shall know what you mean.' The eldest said, 'I love my father as much as the sweetest sugar.'* The second, 'I love my father as much as my

* Or, as the sweetest "apples."

finest dress.'* But the youngest was silent. Then her father said, 'And thou, my dearest child, how much dost thou love me?' 'I know not, father,' she replied, 'nor can I liken my love to anything.' But the king insisted upon her naming something. Then she said at length, 'The best food has no taste for me without salt; therefore, I love you, father, as much as salt.' When the king heard this he fell into a rage, and said, 'If thou lovest me as much as salt, thy love shall also be rewarded with salt.' † Thereupon he shared his kingdom between the two eldest sisters, but he or-

* Or, as the finest "pears."

† Accordingly, she becomes the "salt of the earth."

dered a sack full of salt to be strapped to the back of the youngest, and desired two servants to lead her out into the wood.* We all begged and prayed her father to forgive her," said the queen, "but his anger was not to be moved. Ah, how she wept when she had to leave us!—her path was all strewn with the pearls which dropped from her eyes. The king soon after repented of his cruelty, and sent into every part of the wood to seek his daughter, but no one could find her out. Alas! when I think that the wild beasts may have eaten her, I can scarce bear my grief; many a time

* This incident is in stories older than Shakspeare's King Lear.

I have tried to comfort myself with the hope that she may still be alive, and have hidden herself in some cavern, or found shelter with some compassionate people. But only think, when I opened your emerald casket, there lay a pearl exactly like those which fell from my daughter's eyes! You may imagine how the sight touched my heart. But tell me how you came by that pearl."

Then the prince told her how it was given him by the old woman in the wood, who seemed to him very strange, and must, he thought, be some witch; he had, however, neither heard nor seen anything of the queen's daughter. Nevertheless, the king and queen resolved to

go and seek for the old woman, thinking that where the pearl had been, they must at least hear some tidings of their daughter.

The old woman was sitting outside her door at her wheel, busy spinning;* it was nearly dark, and a log of wood which was burning on the hearth gave a flickering light. All at once there was a great noise; the geese were coming home from the heath, screaming and cackling for joy. Soon after the goose-girl came into the hut; but the old woman hardly thanked her, and only nodded her head. The daughter seated herself, took her spinning wheel, and

* Spinning the web of life.

twisted the thread as briskly as a young girl. Thus they both sat for two whole hours, and spoke not a word to one another. At length something rustled at the window, and two fiery eyes stared into the room: it was an old owl, which shrieked "Whoo-hoo!" thrice. The old woman only looked up for a moment, and said, "Daughter, it is time for you to go out."

The girl rose from her stool and went out. But whither is she gone? Over the meadows, and far away, down into the valley. At length she came to a fountain,* by which stood three old oak

* The magical fountain—which discloses nature as she is within; three oaks—the Trinity, ever at, and as old as the fountain.

trees. Meanwhile the moon had risen over the hills, round and large, and so bright that one could have found a pin upon the ground. She drew off a false skin which covered her face, stooped down to the fountain, and began to wash. When she had done, she dipped the skin also into the water, and then laid it on the meadow, to dry and bleach in the moonshine.* But how was the maiden changed! As soon as her gray locks fell off, her golden hair streamed forth like sunbeams, and covered her whole form as with a mantle; but her eyes shone through it like brilliant stars

* The moon is taken as a symbol of nature.

in the sky, and her cheeks glowed with a rosy-red hue, like apple blossoms.

But the maiden was sorrowful; she sat down, and wept bitterly. One tear after another started from her eyes, and rolled to the ground between her long tresses. She might long have sat there, but for a rustling in the branches of a tree hard by. She sprang up, like a roe which hears the shot of the sportsman. The moon was suddenly hidden behind a black cloud; in an instant the maiden had put the false covering on her face, and vanished like a light blown out by the wind.

She ran back to the cottage trembling like an aspen leaf. The old woman

was standing before the door, and the maiden was going to tell her all that had happened, but the old woman smiled pleasantly and said, "I know it already, my child." So she led her into the room, and lighted a fresh log of wood: she did not, however, sit down again to the spinning wheel, but fetched the broom and began to sweep and scour the floor. "Mother," said the girl, "what are you about? why do you begin work at such a late hour?" "Do you know what hour it is?" asked the old woman. "Not yet midnight," answered the maiden, "but already past eleven." "Have you forgotten," continued the old woman, "that it is just three years ago, to-day,

that you came to me? Your time is up —we cannot live together any longer."

The maiden started, and said, "Alas, dear mother, will you drive me away? whither shall I go? I have no other friends or home. I have done all that you desired, and you have always been good to me: do not send me away!" But the old woman would not tell the maiden what was to happen. "I cannot stay any longer here," * said she; "but when I leave the house, all must be neat and in order; therefore do not hinder me in my work. Be not troubled about

* The old woman, in this story, must as surely disappear (or die), as must the old King in the story of Faithful John: and this, too, at the moment when the son or the daughter enters upon the true inheritance.

yourself; you shall find a home, and will be satisfied with the present which I shall give you." "But tell me what is going to happen," said the maiden. The old woman however only said, "Do not disturb me at my work: say not a word more, but go into your chamber,* take the false covering off your face, and put on the silken dress which you wore when you came to me; then wait in your room until I call you."

But we must now go back to the king and queen, whom we left as they were setting out with the prince to seek

* Your *chamber*, that is, into your inner or spiritual life; and remove every veil from your soul: then "wait," &c.

for the old woman on the heath. During the night the prince had been separated from them, and had to pursue his way alone. The next day he thought that he had found the right path, and he went on and on until it grew dark: then he climbed up into a tree,* meaning to rest there for the night, as he was afraid that he might lose his way.

When the moon rose, and shone upon hill and dale, the prince observed some one coming down the hill; he looked, and presently saw that it was the goosegirl whom he had met at the old woman's cottage. "Oh ho!" cried he, "here

*N. B. He ascends the TREE. In all of these stories the tree has a special significance.

she comes!" But how was he astonished, when she tripped to the fountain, laid aside the skin, and washed herself. Her golden hair streamed over her shoulders, and he saw how beautiful she was.* He hardly dared to breathe, but stretched out his head between the branches as far as he could, and gazed on her with a fixed look. Either he leaned forward too far, or from some other cause, suddenly the branch cracked, and in the same instant she glided into the false skin, started off like a roe, and just as the moon was hidden by a cloud she vanished from his sight.

* This is the beauty of nature as she is, truly, in the spirit, but not as she appears to the senses.

Scarcely had she disappeared, when the prince got down from the tree and hastened after her. He had not gone far, when he saw in the twilight two persons wandering over the meadow. It was the king and queen, who had spied from afar off the light in the old woman's cottage, and were hastening toward it. Then the prince told them what wonderful things he had seen at the fountain, and they had no doubt that the maiden was their lost daughter; so they jogged on, full of joy, and soon came to the cottage. The geese were sitting in a ring,* with their heads under their wings, fast asleep,

*Like the little toads *around* their mother in the story of Dummling.

and not one of them stirred. The king and queen peeped in at the window, and there sat the old woman, spinning; she nodded her head as the wheel went round, but did not turn. All was neat and clean in the room, just as if the little men of the mist lived there, who carry no dust on their feet; but their daughter was not to be seen.

They gazed for some time, and at length plucked up courage and tapped gently at the casement. The old woman seemed as if she had expected them: she rose up, and said in a friendly voice, "Come in! I know you already." When they entered the cottage, the old woman said, "You might have spared yourselves

this long journey, if you had not cruelly driven away your child, who is so good and lovable. No harm has, however, come to her; these three years long she has had to tend my geese, but she has learnt nothing bad, and has kept her heart pure. But you have been punished enough by the grief you have suffered." And so saying she went to the little chamber and cried, "Come out, my darling child!" Then the door opened, and the king's daughter stepped forth in her silken dress, with her golden hair and glancing eyes, and she looked in truth like an angel.

Then she ran to her father and mother, fell upon their neck and kissed

them; * and they all wept for very joy—they could not help it. The young prince stood near them, and when the maiden looked at him her cheeks grew as red as a moss-rose, but she knew not why.

The king said, "My dear child, I have given away my whole kingdom: what can I give you?" "She wants nothing," said the old woman; "I make her a present of the tears which she has wept for you; they are real pearls, more beautiful than ever were found in the sea, and are worth more than your whole kingdom; † and, as a reward for her services, I give

* Thus does the father meet the returning prodigal son.

† A feeling heart, and the endowments of nature, are worth more than kingdoms.

her my cottage." As the old woman finished speaking she vanished from their sight. The walls shook and rattled a little, and when they looked round, the cottage was changed into a magnificent palace. A royal table was spread with choice viands, and servants were running about hither and thither.

The story goes no further; for my grandmother, who told it to me, and whose memory was weak, had forgotten the rest.* I have always had a notion that the beautiful daughter of the king married the prince, and that they staid

* She had not seen "the last chamber at the end of the long corridor," and chose to tell only so much of life as she had seen.

in the palace, and lived there happily together until they died. Whether the old woman's snow-white geese were real maidens, and whether they now took their human forms, and remained as servants to the young queen, is more than I can say positively, but I have a strong suspicion that it was so. Thus much is certainly true, that the old woman was no witch; very probably, too, it was she who had bestowed the gift of weeping pearls, instead of tears, on the king's daughter at her birth. Such things, unluckily, do not come to pass nowadays, or else poor folks would soon grow rich.

ERRATA.

Page 10, line 6, for *fasthold*, read foothold.
" 32, " 7, " *into*, " unto.
" 38, " 14, " *early*, " easy.
" 42, " 1, " *Primarina*, " Primavera.
" 53, " 2, " *house*, " home.
" 55, " 19, omit the word, *in*.
" 56, " 2, refer to Wisdom, vii, 14.